

Report on Wales' inaugural International Crime Fiction
Festival

Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21

26th April – 3rd May 2021



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Executive Summary

In 2020, Welsh crime writers' collective Crime Cymru (founded in 2017), took the decision to establish Wales first international crime fiction festival. In the context of England's 12 crime fiction festivals, Scotland's 5 and Northern Ireland's recent contribution, Noireland, it was obvious to the membership of Crime Cymru that our own country's lack of a distinctive presence in this field has been partly responsible for publishers' well-publicised reluctance to publish Welsh-set crime fiction.

Within days of the decision to launch our festival, a working group was set up and plans were set in motion. Barely a year later, in April 2021, **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21** – made possible by the generous financial support of Aberystwyth Town Council – presented 18 world-class events over 8 days. As the first in the festival's biennial online/physical model, the 2021 festival was held online, with video conferencing platform Zoom streaming to Youtube Live.

The **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21** programme included international bestsellers and prize winners from the crime writing community such as Lee Child, Clare Mackintosh, Peter James and Elly Griffiths as well as two internationally-acclaimed authors from our guest nation, Iceland. In all, 52 authors, 2 journalists, three publishers, 1 actor and 2 established interviewers appeared during the week.

Tickets were offered free and 3,300 people registered to watch **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21** events via Eventbrite, with feedback percentages suggesting that registrant numbers represented approximately 2,800 households. Ticket bookings were international with 22% from Wales, 47% from the rest of the UK, 8% from Europe including Ireland, 16% from North America and 6% from the rest of the world. 60% of registrants watched events live with another 2000+ people watching recorded versions of the events on Youtube during the festival. Festival videos remain available on the **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival** Youtube channel and, to date, they have been watched more than 4,450 times by people from all over the world.

Author feedback on the event was enormously positive and all invitees have accepted an invitation to appear at our next festival – **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '22**, in Aberystwyth next year.

Feedback from our audience has also been very positive across all aspects of the festival, ranging from technical production to authors featured, with 61% of respondents stating their intention to come to **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '22** in Aberystwyth. Assuming an industry standard 20% response rate, this would bring an additional 500+ households in to Aberystwyth for **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '22** from those who accessed **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online** alone.

1. Background to the Festival

a. What is Crime Cymru?

Crime Cymru is a not-for-profit membership organisation founded in 2017 with three main aims:

1. To support Welsh crime writers
2. To develop new crime writing talent in Wales
3. To promote Wales, Welsh culture and Welsh crime writing in particular to the rest of the UK and the wider world.

(Further details can be found on our website at www.Crime.Cymru)

Meeting the aims:

1. Over the last four years the collective has developed from the dreams of a handful of authors to a membership organisation of over 40 published crime writers. Support in line with aim 1 is offered via a closed Facebook page – the Crime Cymru Discussion Page – maintained by the group. This acts as a forum for members to contact each other and allows all members to contribute to the governance of Crime Cymru. The Discussion Page also offers support to our associate members (see below) who have access to it.
2. Crime Cymru has two categories of membership – full (for published authors) and associate (for those as yet unpublished and for non-writers who are, nevertheless involved in the crime writing industry in some way.) Associate members are supported by full members who may enter into informal mentoring relationships with them. As a springboard for new talent, in addition to **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online**, this year Crime Cymru has also launched *Gwobr Nofel Gyntaf Crime Cymru First Novel Prize*. This was launched in the same week as **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online** and the first award ceremony will feature at a champagne reception at **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '22** in Aberystwyth, next year.
3. Spreading the word. Over the last four years Crime Cymru members have contributed to many UK crime fiction panels from large festivals like Bloody Scotland and Crimefest to smaller ones like Llangwm and Llandeilo Literary Festivals. Crime Cymru has also run festival events in partnership:
 - In June 2018 Crime Cymru partnered with Cardiff Central Library to run a 3-day crime fiction event – Crime and Coffee which was well attended.
 - In September 2019, the directors of the Crickhowell Literary Festival asked Crime Cymru to put on a whole day of crime writing panels to open the festival. This both provided an additional attraction for the festival and widened Crime Cymru's reach into audiences.Crime Cymru has a website on which each full member has a page and a weekly blog (which members contribute to on a rota) is posted. These posts are designed

both to showcase authors' life and work and to drive traffic to the site for the benefit of the whole organisation.

Crime Cymru also maintains a public-facing Facebook page on which authors' news is posted and where the public can engage with our writers, along with Twitter and Instagram accounts.

b) How and why did we decide to establish Wales's first international crime fiction festival?

Given that crime fiction is the biggest selling UK genre, the crime fiction festival scene in the UK is a vibrant one.

England currently has more than a dozen crime fiction festivals ranging from small, local affairs to huge commercial operations which bring in thousands of festival-goers from all over the UK and which attract a significant contingent from North America (particularly Harrogate's Theakstons' Old Peculiar Crime Fiction Festival and Crimefest in Bristol.) Scotland currently offers its population a choice of 5 different crime fiction festivals, the most significant of which is Bloody Scotland in Stirling, and Northern Ireland has one – Noireland, in Belfast. Until now, Wales has not had its own festival, forcing crime fiction fans to travel significant distances – and to take their hard-earned cash – over the border to see their favourite authors.

It had always been Crime Cymru's medium-term goal to establish our own national/international crime fiction festival as the most effective way of achieving the third of our founding aims as we felt this was the best way in which to put Welsh crime writing on the map – one of Crime Cymru's primary aims.

Currently, though Scotland's crime writers have an international branding and recognition as writers of 'Tartan Noir' and those of other small nations, like those of Iceland and Denmark benefit from the 'Nordic Noir' tag, Wales has no such brand recognition. This makes it difficult for authors setting their crime fiction in Wales to attract publishing deals which, in turn, leaves the Welsh crime reading public without representation in fiction. It also deprives Wales of a voice in the biggest-selling literary genre in the UK.

Crime Cymru's leaders were determined that any Crime Cymru festival should be ambitious and far-reaching from the outset. Instead of catering only for and to Wales, the festival should bring the world to Aberystwyth and to Welsh crime writing. Our vision is a festival that celebrates the best of crime writing in the UK and beyond, including and showcasing Welsh crime writers' work in the context of other crime writing that is enjoyed by UK readers.

At our Zoom AGM in April 2020, the membership decided that, unlikely at it seemed, the pandemic offered us a unique opportunity. Many festivals, from the international (eg

Hay Festival) to the local (eg Llandeilo Literary Festival) were moving online. Not only would this make it easier to attract authors to **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival** but it would also allow the festival to reach a worldwide audience. We therefore decided that our inaugural festival - **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21** - would be a digital offering, with the first 'real world' festival - **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '22** – taking place in Aberystwyth the following year.

c) What is our vision for **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival**?

The festival's mission statement is:

1. To establish a world-class, biennial international literary festival for Wales where:
 - The biennial pattern will alternate online/real world festivals so as to increase audience 'reach' and promotion of Welsh crime writing, Welsh culture and Wales as a country.
 - Welsh crime writing, in all media, is celebrated alongside books and TV crime drama from the wider UK and internationally.
 - Welsh readers are afforded the opportunity to meet industry-leading authors who are only seen at major festivals, in Wales.
 - Authors not yet familiar with Wales are introduced to our country, culture and language via the extraordinary range of Welsh crime fiction and TV drama they will encounter and by holidaying in the Aberystwyth area before, during and after the festival.
 - Wales is seen as a confident, outward-looking, multicultural nation with its own culture

2. To benefit Aberystwyth and the surrounding area by:
 - Bringing a significant number of visitors to the area during the festival.
 - Sourcing all materials and services possible from local businesses and suppliers.
 - Offering the opportunity for people of all ages and demographics to get involved at all levels of the festival, not just as ticket-holders.
 - Bringing crime writing to young people via school events.
 - Promoting Aberystwyth, the Welsh coast and Wales more generally not only as a holiday venue but as a cultural and business centre.

4. To further the three founding aims of the Crime Cymru collective and our festival's foundation values: Collaboration, Inclusivity, Sustainability, Authenticity.

e. Why Aberystwyth?

Discussion amongst the membership was extensive but the case was made for Aberystwyth on the following grounds:

- It is in neither north nor south Wales, making it equally accessible to all areas of Wales, ensuring that all the country's readers will have equal access to the festival.
- With the national library and the university, Aberystwyth is acknowledged as Wales's cultural capital – the perfect setting for our festival.
- The town already hosts various festivals from the comedy festival to a cycling festival.
- Aberystwyth is a town with excellent hospitality facilities from B and B's to large hotels and with a wide range of cafes, bars and restaurants to cater for festival goers.
- It is a town large enough to accommodate an international festival but with a community small and interconnected enough to feel an ownership of the festival.
- Aberystwyth is a university town with all the dynamism and diversity that implies, factors that make it attractive to festival visitors.
- As a vibrantly bilingual town and area, it was felt that Aberystwyth would be the perfect town to introduce festival goers who are new to Wales to our country, our culture and our language.

The festival working group has adopted a strapline: '**Gŵyl Crime Cymru Festival** – not just *in* Aberystwyth but *with* Aberystwyth'.

e) Composition of the **Gŵyl Crime Cymru Festival** Working Group

The AGM mandated Crime Cymru's co-chairs, Alis Hawkins and Matt Johnson, to establish a working group to take forward festival plans. Initially, the group comprised:

- Alis Hawkins – a Ceredigion native and Welsh speaker, Alis is also a CWA dagger shortlisted author.
- Matt Johnson – another CWA dagger shortlisted writer, Matt has returned to Wales to live and write in recent times.
- Nellie Williams – Nellie is marketing manager for the Glanusk Estate and ran a very successful series of events at very little notice for Wales Week Berkshire, to which she solicited Crime Cymru's involvement. With her experience in marketing and social media and her passion for all things Welsh we felt that she would be a valuable contribution to our organising group.
- Jacky Collins – Jacky established the Newcastle Noir Crime Fiction Festival and is very well known in the crime fiction world, acting as chair and interviewer for many different events at festivals all over the country and abroad.

As plans proceeded and it became clear that we needed additional expertise two additional members of Crime Cymru joined the working group.

- Mark Ellis, a former lawyer and successful businessman as treasurer.

- Beverley Jones, former journalist and press officer for South Wales Police as our press and media liaison.

f) The Biennial Pattern

Having decided to run an online festival in the first instance, followed by a festival in Aberystwyth, discussions with various interest groups suggested that adopting a biennial pattern of alternating online and Aberystwyth-based festivals would have many advantages:

- Greater audience access to festivals online compared to 'real world', allowing those who cannot travel easily and those overseas to access events in their own homes.
- The ability to showcase our events to the wider world with no constraints bar time differences.
- Avoidance of 'festival fatigue' amongst the people of Aberystwyth and Crime Cymru.
- An appeal to different kinds of sponsors.

g) Being distinctive

As outlined above, almost 20 crime fiction festivals are held, annually, in the UK and, in such a crowded market place, we are determined to make **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival** stand out as distinctive and distinctively Welsh. We want visiting speakers to feel welcomed and valued, to feel that they have had an experience something they could not have had anywhere else. We aim to achieve this through:

- Being distinctively and proudly Welsh and taking pains to introduce our guests to our language and culture.
- Being the most welcoming festival in the UK by offering our speakers as much support and information as possible prior to online events and the individual attention of volunteers and Crime Cymru members when they come to our physical festivals.
- Providing multiple opportunities for our speakers to meet the public in relaxed surroundings – pub quiz, noson lawen, the festival bar, Noir at the Bar style events.
- Giving each panel event a distinctively Welsh flavour through questions chosen and discussion points raised.
- The involvement of Crime Cymru authors at every event.
- Our unique approach to programming which does not recognise 'greater' and 'lesser' events, putting all speakers on an equal footing in an egalitarian fashion which we believe to be representative of a distinctively Welsh approach to life.

1. Finding backing for the Festival

a. Backing for the first online festival

The decision having been taken that Aberystwyth was the ideal venue, the working group's first task was to secure the support of Aberystwyth town council. Council members and the mayor, Charlie Kingsbury, were contacted with details of Crime Cymru's plans for the festival and a Zoom meeting was set up with the full council. At that meeting, Aberystwyth town council's enthusiastic backing was secured and Charlie Kingsbury became the council's festival liaison link.

A working group visit was subsequently made to Aber in June 2020 to meet with Mr Kingsbury and Town Clerk, Gweneira Raw-Rees, and to begin research into potential venues. Unfortunately, further in-person meetings were prevented by the re-imposition of Covid travel restrictions which has effectively halted some crucial planning for next year's festival.

Aberystwyth town council subsequently voted to provide **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival** with £5000 backing for our first, online, festival - **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21** – which enabled the working group to progress with plans.

The funds were spent as follows:

- Website hosting, designing and building by Aberystwyth company Gwe Cambrian Web:
 - £915
- Placing an 'advertorial' in the Aberystwyth EGO to inform local residents of plans for the festival and to announce a public Zoom meeting:
 - £200
- Employing Aberystwyth company Haka Entertainment to produce our online festival to the high standard expected of an international festival :
 - £1700
- Employing a firm recommended by the Welsh Council for Voluntary Organisations to help us apply for CIO status:
 - £1700

(This was match funding as one of our working group members very generously put up the other £1700)

- Facebook advertising for **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21**
 - £200

Total: £4,715

The festival working group would like formally to record its immense gratitude to Aberystwyth Town Council for their support, vision and confidence in **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival**. Without their placing funds at our disposal, all our ambitious plans would have come to nothing.

2. Liaison with other organisations

The working group was keen to liaise with as many stakeholder groups as possible to gain advice, support and backing (of all kinds) for **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival** and, to date, partner organisations are:

- a. Literature Wales – Bronwen Price has been tremendously helpful in terms of contacts, advice and ongoing support via social media and networking.
- b. Aberystwyth University - we have worked with both the English and Creative Writing Department and, with the help of a PhD student who is our voluntary liaison with the university, the Marketing Department. The Marketing Department supplied a high-quality video which ran at the beginning of each online event to introduce viewers to Aberystwyth and to next year's festival in the town.
[<https://vimeo.com/soupcreative/review/530836360/274f885f75>]
This video has been the subject of much praise with several authors saying that they are now even more keen to come to Aberystwyth next year.
- c. Ceredigion County Council – Discussions as to how CCC can support and help the development of **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival** are ongoing.
- d. Welsh Government Major Events Team – Discussions as to possible funding streams have taken place and will be ongoing as the working group seeks to secure funding in order to build on the outstanding success of **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21** with an ambitious physical festival – **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '22** – in Aberystwyth.
- e. Society of Authors in Wales – Dr Matthew Jarvis who chairs the Wales group is also a member of staff in the Department of English and Creative Writing at Aberystwyth University and has proved an invaluable liaison for the organising group.
- f. Advancing Aberystwyth – attempts were made to contact representatives of the Business Improvement District. However, Covid restrictions made this difficult and, as of April 2021, the BID is no longer in operation.

3. Programming the digital festival

a. Decision on crime Cymru/'headline' author mix

As outlined above, the aim of the festival in terms of speakers featured is a) to bring internationally known authors from the UK and beyond to Wales and b) to showcase Welsh authors.

Unlike many festivals, which run headline events in large venues for well known authors and lesser events in smaller venues for less well known or as yet unknown authors, the **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival** model is different. In line with one of our founding values – inclusivity (see Appendix 1) – our model is to include both headline authors and up-and-coming authors at every event. The aim is draw our audience with a well-known author and to introduce them to as yet less well-known Welsh authors.

Using this model, in 18 events at **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival ' 21 Online**, 24 Crime Cymru authors were featured out of a total of 55 speakers overall.

We hope very much to replicate this kind of exposure of Welsh talent at **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '22** in Aberystwyth both through panel events but also through Noir at the Bar-style informal readings and meet-the-author sessions at Aberystwyth's bookshops.

b) Bilingualism

Crime Cymru is a bilingual organisation and represents authors who write in Welsh as well as in English. It is essential therefore to ensure that our festival includes Welsh language events.

Currently, 7% of our membership (3 of 40) publishes in Welsh and this was reflected in the provision of 1 panel out of 18 in Welsh. (We had hoped to run two but various approaches failed to result in a booking, though we do have useful contacts for **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '22**). It is worth noting, in planning future online festivals, that the Welsh language event was by far the least well attended online event despite extensive coverage on Welsh language media – radio, television and via social media – and some paid advertising on Facebook. However, we do not expect this to be the case in festivals actually held in Aber where there is a large and vibrant Welsh speaking community of both first and second language speakers.

Our aim at Aber '22 is to have at least one Welsh panel per day and to provide at least two Welsh-language authors for our schools outreach programme – one for primary schools and one for secondary school.

c) True Crime

Though all current members of Crime Cymru write fiction rather than true crime, the audience for true crime is enormous and it was felt that this would attract a different kind of viewer to **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21** who might then also be inclined to sign up for some of our other free events. To this end, in keeping with our ambitious aims of offering household names to our audience, we approached the team behind *The Pembrokeshire Murders* and ITV news presenter Andrea Byrne to be involved. All three agreed and will also appear at **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '22** in Aber, with Andrea having committed in principle to being the presenter for each of the three true crime events we plan.

d) TV drama

Like true crime, TV crime dramas attract a different audience to crime fiction so it was essential to reflect this at **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '21 Online**. The *Keeping Faith* panel with writer/creator, Matthew Hall and actor Alex Davies was extremely popular. We aim to have at least three TV crime drama panels next year, with one featuring Welsh language crime drama.

e) Contacting authors

This was a laborious and time-consuming task involving many hours of contacting publishers, agents and, where these were not fruitful (many did not respond to our overtures as we were, at that stage, an unknown festival) seeking individual contact with authors online via websites and social media. Eventually a roster of 22 'headline' authors accepted our invitation to be part of **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '21 Online** including household names like Lee Child, Clare Mackintosh, Peter James, Elly Griffiths, Abir Mukherjee and two Icelandic authors from our guest nation – Yrsa Sigurðardóttir and Ragnar Jonasson.

In accordance with our values our roster of authors was as diverse as we could make it, with a particular emphasis on writers of colour who are under-represented in publishing, currently.

It is also Crime Cymru's aim that, at each **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival** and **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online** we will feature authors from a guest nation, extending the offer to our visitors. It seemed appropriate to invite Iceland, as another small, minority language-speaking nation to be our first guests and our Icelandic guests enthusiastically embraced the idea.

f) Paid-for events

During the planning stages of **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU FestivalOnline '21** the working group was approached by two publishers, Honno and Diamond Books (a new Bristol-based publisher with a crime imprint – Diamond Crime – seeking to launch at the festival) to ask whether they could run launch events at the festival. Both publishers paid the costs of production for their event - £110.

It was gratifying to receive these approaches as they indicated that publishers on both sides of the border see the value and potential reach of **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival**.

4. Establishing an Internet Presence for **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21**

a) Website

In order to establish a permanent and credible online presence for **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival** and, more immediately, to allow for booking tickets to **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21** a website was essential. In order that it should be in-keeping with our branding as Wales's international crime fiction festival, it was necessary to ensure that it was well-designed and attractive. Both these factors ruled out 'do it yourself' models of production.

Our funding from Aberystwyth Town Council enabled us to commission Gwe Cambrian Web, an Aberystwyth business, to design and build our website and working group members worked closely with them throughout the year on our specific requirements.

b) Social media

As Communications Manager, Nellie Williams has taken responsibility for setting up **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival** pages on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and she writes copy for our online newsletter and handles subscriber registrations.

c) Crime Cymru coverage

Crime Cymru as an organisation has a dedicated website, Facebook page and Twitter account all of which publicised the festival in advance and commented on it while it was in progress. These accounts, like those above, continue to direct followers to:

d) Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Youtube Channel

Once our Gŵyl Crime Cymru Festival Youtube channel had been set up, our festival production company, Haka Entertainment, ensured that each video was professionally edited and posted on the Youtube Channel within 24 hours of each event. As agreed with our guest authors, these videos will remain on our channel for a minimum of 28 days and, at time of writing, have now been seen by in excess of 4450 people.

5. Supporting the wider literary culture in Wales through Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '21 Online

a. Partner bookshops

In order to work towards Crime Cymru's third aim (to promote Welsh culture to the wider UK) the decision was taken by the working group to invite Welsh bookshops to partner with our events. Nine bookshops accepted our invitation meaning that each was partnered with two events.

In return for promoting their bookshop at the event and on our website at booking, we asked only that bookshops promote **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21** on their own social media. We provided each shop with a poster to display instore and 100 bookmarks promoting the festival. The bookshops involved were from all areas of Wales, from Awen Meirion in Bala and Browsers in Porthmadog to Gwisgo Bookworm in Aberaeron, Bookish in Crickhowell, Griffin Books in Penarth and Chepstow Bookshop on the English border.

b. Crime Cymru First Novel Competition

To further Crime Cymru's second stated aim – to develop new Welsh crime writing talent – we chose to launch the **Gwobr Novel Gyntaf Crime Cymru First Novel Prize** at the same time as our festival. The award ceremony for the first two winners – one in Welsh and one in English will take place at **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '22** in Aberystwyth and Crime Cymru feel that both will add lustre to the other. (For details of the prize, please see our website, Crime.Cymru.)

6. Ticket sales

a. Free or paid for?

The working group took the decision that, as a new festival looking to capture a live audience for **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '22** in Aberystwyth, we would be well advised to make our events free for our inaugural festival in order to encourage people to register on a 'nothing to lose' basis. This, however, depended on all our guest authors being prepared to appear on a no-fee basis.

As Crime Cymru, as an organisation, supports the Society of Authors' position that authors should not work for nothing, our invitation to authors encompassed the whole of our first two-year cycle, asking them to appear at this year's **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21** and next year's **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '22** in Aberystwyth. Our invitation clearly stated that, at next year's festival all authors would be paid a fee and provided with accommodation and, on that basis, authors very generously agreed to appear *gratis* at our inaugural event.

b. Use of the **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival** website

It was decided to run ticket bookings from a page on our website as this would serve several important purposes:

- ii) to allow people to register for tickets quickly and easily through a single point of access

- ii) to drive traffic to our website, improving 'discoverability' on Google and other search engines

- iii) to encourage people to sign up for our newsletter, allowing us to keep them informed about **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '22** in Aberystwyth.

c. Choice of Eventbrite ticketing

Eventbrite was chosen as our ticket handler as they deal well with free events and provide a good statistical platform that allows events to analyse their audience in detail. This has proved to be an extremely good decision, as evidenced by the detailed evaluation summaries below.

7. Production of **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '21 Online**

a. In house or out to tender?

As the working group were determined that viewers should be given the very best, most professional experience possible and that authors should be made to feel welcome, valued and relaxed when appearing at **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '21 Online** (see 1.g above) the decision was taken to commission a production team to produce the events.

b. The tendering process

Two companies were identified: Haka Entertainment, a relatively recent start-up in Aberystwyth, and Orchard Video, a more established firm already running major online events for national organisations, eg the British Heart Foundation. Meetings were held with both companies and quotes sought. Orchard's quote was considerably higher and the working group felt that, as an Aberystwyth-based firm, Haka Entertainment would be a better fit, particularly as they were keen to establish an ongoing and mutually beneficial relationship with Crime Cymru. A fee was agreed at a

discounted rate, based on the prospect of Haka providing further services to Crime Cymru if **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online'21** was a success.

c. Decision on platform

Crime Cymru maintains a Zoom Pro account for use of the membership and it would have been possible to run a very basic festival on that platform. However, doing so had two main disadvantages:

ii) Audiences on Zoom Pro are limited to 100 and the working group was confident that audiences for most events would be larger than this.

ii) It is not practical to begin and end events separately for panel members and audience. This meant that there would be no potential for participating authors to chat together 'off camera' before or after the panel events.

iii) Without the help of a producer skilled in digital production, it would not be possible to show our promotional video at the beginning of events, nor a screen showing the dates for **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '22** at the end, without the production seeming 'clunky' and amateurish.

Meetings with Haka staff revealed the various decisions that had to be made in terms of platform – use of Zoom Webinar or streaming live Zoom content to Facebook or Youtube.

For reasons of audience numbers and the ability of the audience to interact relatively easily with panels via the Youtube Live chat function, this platform was eventually chosen. This involved several meetings where different options were trialled live.

Use of Youtube Live also meant that it was a relatively simple matter to record sessions and post them on our **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival** Youtube channel.

d. The final product

Having all the technical aspects of each event managed by a Haka producer allowed those chairing panels to concentrate on welcoming and chatting to visiting speakers, confident that all that was needed to make the event a success was being handled by the producer. This created a relaxed and enjoyable experience for our speakers.

Using the combination of Zoom and Youtube also enabled us to provide a virtual 'green room' for authors before and after each event so that chair and speakers could socialise to some extent both before their event went live and afterwards. This virtual green room facility also allowed Crime Cymru's co-chairs to meet and welcome all visiting speakers before each event and to join them in the green room after the event. This permitted a degree of social contact not usually available to speakers at digital events and left visiting authors with the impression of **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21** as a sociable, welcoming and professionally-handled festival at which they had been able to meet and chat to their crime-writing peers in a relaxed and informal way.

8. The **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21** Programme

A subgroup had approached 26 bestselling/prizewinning authors from the UK and Iceland with an invitation to appear at both **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '21 Online** and **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '22** and 22 took up our invitation.

The subgroup then worked towards a programme that included both headline authors, Crime Cymru members and two publishers' events as described above.

The proposed programme of 18 events was then circulated to all authors and, following some re-scheduling to meet individual needs, agreed.

As soon as the final programme was agreed with all parties and the **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival** website went live, the programme was posted along with a date for ticket bookings a month before the first event.

9. Ticket sales

a) Initial buzz

The simultaneous launch of the **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival** website and social media accounts created an enormous amount of interest and enthusiasm in both the crime reading and crime writing worlds and ticket registrations began quickly, as the Eventbrite link to each event was posted and each was given its own social media 'push'. Our communications manager had created a network of social media contacts to help spread the word, and the membership of Crime Cymru, including the member with current responsibility for social media, were also encouraged to spread the word.

b) Promoting sales

All events were 'pushed' on social media to the same extent, though it was impossible to regulate how much individual authors publicised their events on their own social media accounts.

However some panels – particularly the Welsh language panel and one or two featuring less well-known authors – saw slower growth in registrations for tickets and the decision was taken to use £200 in Facebook advertising to boost these events.

c) Final ticket sales

In total, by the end of the festival, more than 3,300 individual registrations for tickets had been made and several events had more than 200 individual bookings. This is far in excess of many established festivals, many of which struggle to reach 100 bookings per event and is testament to the excitement generated by the launch of **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival** and its highly ambitious guest list.

(For more details and a breakdown of audience by region, see 15 a. below)

10. Use of Social Media

To capitalise on the UK-wide popularity of crime fiction **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival** has a Facebook page, a Twitter account and an Instagram account. The membership of Crime Cymru has been encouraged to follow the accounts on all these platforms and to retweet, repost and generally engage with the accounts, boosting reach and increasing follower numbers. Guests at the festival – some of whom have followers numbering tens of thousands – have also boosted reach by retweeting and posting in their own right about their involvement with **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21** and it was clear, in the case of some authors particularly active on social media, that this made a significant difference to ticket registrations.

All the accounts were established in October, six months before the festival, so as to provide a long lead-time for promoting our programme. Twitter quickly proved the most successful of the platforms confirming many authors' experience of Twitter as the medium best suited to attracting new readers and communicating with existing fans.

In accordance with this early trend, of the three platforms, most energy has been put into developing **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival's** Twitter profile. Follower growth has been steady and organic rising from 71 at the end of the account's first month to a current total of 1,052. However, followers are not the most important metric when analysing the effectiveness of social media accounts. Impressions (the number of times a tweet is presented to its audience) moved up from 9,300 in October to 412,000 in the Month to the 10th of May. This is a very considerable reach into the Twitter audience, in a brief timeframe, for **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival**.

Profile visits – Twitter users checking out the **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival** profile which has details of the festival and a link to the website – also rose dramatically during the month leading up to the festival, reflecting 'marketing push' on the part of the working group's communications manager.

The 1k+ followers that **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival** now has on Twitter form a very solid base from which to market **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '22** in Aberystwyth.

11. Publicity Other than Social Media

a. Press

The working group's press officer solicited information from all Crime Cymru members on local print, radio and television opportunities across Wales and put together a comprehensive press pack which was distributed to online and print newspapers and journals all over Wales.

b. Websites

Articles were submitted to several influential crime fiction blogs and websites, as well as to the Crime Writers' Association in-house newsletter which is produced in print

and digital form and circulated to more than 1000 members of the crime writing fraternity.

c. Radio

Several Welsh radio shows, on both BBC Radio Wales and BBC Radio Cymru asked for representatives of Crime Cymru to speak about the festival. Approaches came from the Lynn Bowles show, the Arts Show and rhaglen Aled Hughes' show and members of the working group and of the wider Crime Cymru membership provided excellent interviews to each outlet.

d. Television

An approach came from S4C's Heno and an interview was recorded via Zoom and broadcast during the festival.

12. Approaches from other organisations

a. New publishers

As outlined above Bristol-based Diamond Books, one of whose directors is a member of Crime Cymru approached the festival working group to use **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21** as a platform for the publishing house's launch. This was agreed on condition that the company pay production costs for that event.

b. Publishers promoting their authors

Welsh publishing house Honno, which has a connection with Crime Cymru as they publish three of Crime Cymru members, contacted the working group to ask if they might launch a debut author's crime novel at the festival. As with Diamond Books this was agreed on condition that the company paid production costs for that event.

These requests demonstrate publishers' appreciation of the reach that is possible for a biennial online/real world festival like **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival**

c. Curtis Brown

Literary agents Curtis Brown – one of the largest and highest-profile literary agents in Britain – approached the working group at the beginning of the festival, when social and other media coverage was making the presence of the festival felt in literary circles, to propose a discount for their crime writing courses to all registrants for festival tickets. This proposal was made at too late a stage to implement but the fact that a literary agency of Curtis Brown's stature wished to be associated **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21** indicated that the festival had achieved a very desirable level of branding and recognition.

Talks are currently ongoing with Curtis Brown as to how they might be associated with **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '22** in Aberystwyth.

13. Preparation for Festival Week

The working group was acutely aware that, as our inaugural festival, the way in which **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21** was run would set the tone and define the reputation of our festival, going forward. It was essential that we should present visitors to the festival with a professional product and it was also vital that we should give our high-profile guests a very positive experience which would make them keen to come to Aberystwyth next year and to be ambassadors for Wales' international crime fiction festival and, by extension, for Wales itself.

As such, it was imperative that all events should run to professional standard and that they should be recognisably rooted in Crime Cymru as an organisation. To achieve both those aims, the following preparation was undertaken.

a. Panel Moderators (chairs)

With only three exceptions (the two publisher events and our true crime event which featured ITV Wales newsreader, Andrea Byrne, in the role) all panels were moderated (chaired) by Crime Cymru members.

b. Training for moderators

All moderators, experienced or novices, were given training by the working group which included Zoom training. This meant that they approached their panel events with considerably more confidence than would, otherwise, have been the case and this, in turn, allowed them to create a relaxed and relaxing atmosphere for our guest speakers.

c. Moderator communications with panel members

Detailed instructions were provided to each moderator as to how they should communicate with their panel members so that all panel members, whatever event they were appearing at, would be fully informed about the festival as a whole and their event in particular. The crime writing world is a small one and the reputation of a festival – for good or ill – is quickly earned and shared. Thus, it was very important that all our guest speakers should have a similar, highly positive experience of **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21**. (That this was achieved can be seen in the almost unanimous awarding of most positive response possible to the author feedback question: 'How likely are you to recommend **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival** to other authors?')

The working group also produced detailed technical protocols for moderators and for their panel members so as to give everybody who was taking part in the festival a clear understanding of how the festival would be run via Zoom and Youtube Live, how the recording would take place and what to expect on the night.

d. Run through with Haka

The week before the start of **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21** a technical rehearsal was carried out with Haka Entertainment including our introductory video and streaming to Youtube Live. This ensured that all technical aspects of the festival were in place and provided reassurance to the working group as to how everything would work on the night.

e. Further moderators' meeting

Following this, a further Zoom meeting with moderators took place so as to ensure that all moderators knew exactly what would happen on the evening as certain aspects of the running order had changed during the run-through and it was essential to ensure that everybody involved in hosting **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21** should be confident that they knew exactly how each event would be run. This confidence would then communicate itself to panel members, ensuring a positive, rewarding experience for our high-profile guests.

14. Festival Week

18 events were held over a period of 8 days, 9 in the evenings and 9 over the bank holiday weekend. (see Appendix 1). The percentage of ticket holders attending events live varied tremendously and was clearly influenced by time of day, with our audience showing a marked preference for evening events over weekend daytime ones.

Youtube recordings of each panel were posted within 24 hours of initial streaming and both ticket holders and non-ticket holders began to avail themselves of the opportunity to watch at their convenience almost immediately. This facility also meant that if any ticket holder had had technical issues with their own broadband or computer, they had a second chance to watch the event they had booked for.

Technically, the festival ran very smoothly thanks to Haka's production and the occasional technical hitch did not detract from what the audience clearly found (see feedback) to be a very professionally produced festival. Contemporaneous feedback from audiences via Youtube chat were universally positive with many commenting on the quality of production.

Author responses to their events were also universally positive and clearly whetted many authors' appetites for **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '22** in Aberystwyth next year. (See 16.a below for details of author feedback.)

15. Audience engagement with Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21

a. Ticket registrations

In total 3,302 people registered for tickets for **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21**.

The ticket registrants were from:

Aberystwyth area	79	2% of total
SW Wales	191	6% of total
South Wales	409	12% of total
North Wales	65	2% of total
English border	146	4% of total
Rest of England	1265	38% of total
Scotland	160	5% of total
Ireland	90	3% of total
Europe	171	5% of total
USA & Canada	521	16% of total
Other	198	6% of total

(incl Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Dubai)

Feedback questionnaire results (see Appendix 7) suggest that these 3,302 registrations represented just over 2,800 households.

b. Live views

Live audience numbers ranged between 45% of registrants and almost 90% with an average of just over 60%. This is in line with other established online festivals which offer free tickets. As noted above, events during the day on the bank holiday weekend were significantly less well attended than those during the evening.

c. Views on Youtube

To date, the 18 videos which have been posted on the Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Youtube Channel have been watched by more than 4,450 people. This indicates that there is an appetite for on-demand delivery of digital events in a society which has moved away from scheduled viewing to on-demand viewing.

16. Evaluation

To capture the views of both our authors and festival ticket holders, the working group sought feedback via questionnaires.

a. Author Feedback

Questionnaires were emailed to all non-Crime Cymru authors who appeared at **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21**. (See Appendix 2) 20 authors responded and their responses were overwhelmingly positive (see Appendix 3). On a 1 – 5 rating scale where 1 represented 'poor' and 5 'excellent', more than 95% of responses scored all aspects of the festival 'excellent'.

b. Author comments

As well as 10 questions rated 1-5, authors were asked for comments, including ‘What were the aspects of your participation in Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online that were most positive for you?’ Author comments were unanimously positive and can be seen in **Appendix 3**.

c. Audience Feedback

A 10-question survey was sent out to a random sample of registrants for the festival using Survey Monkey. This format, which takes no longer than 3 minutes to answer, was chosen for two reasons:

- a) such a brief survey was possible to be distributed using a free tool and
- b) as it is generally agreed that, the shorter the questionnaire, the more likely it is to be completed.

The tool used limited the sample of total registrants who were polled but, assuming a) that the sample was representative of our 2,800 households and b) that it conforms to the industry standard 20% return rate, figures suggests that more than 560 households are already intending to visit Aberystwyth for **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival ’22**.

(For a breakdown of results see **Appendix 4**.)

17. Observations

a. What we have learned

i. Scheduled viewing vs. on-demand viewing

The increased reach of Youtube on-demand via our Youtube channel must be factored in when we hold our next online festival in 2023 as it is highly unlikely that we will be in a position to offer free tickets for future online festivals. It is clear that we are likely to sell more tickets if we can offer access to event recordings for a limited period so that viewers can access the events at a time that suits them.

ii. Evening vs. day time events

It is clear from live audience numbers at our various events that, unlike physical festivals, the audience for online festivals has a market preference for evening events. This will be reflected in our scheduling for **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online ’23**.

iii. Author care

Our questionnaires illustrated the extent to which authors appreciated the high degree of planning and communication undertaken in the run-up to **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online ’21**. From comments in the electronic green room they also very much appreciated the way in which our use of Zoom and Youtube allowed panels to meet online together before the audience was admitted to the event and to remain online together once the event had ended. This allowed a green room atmosphere in which authors who had not met before could get to know each other, the co-chairs of Crime

Cymru could meet with every festival guest and, at the end of events, there was an opportunity for a debrief, a release of tension and mutual congratulations to be offered.

This conviviality stands in stark contrast to many online events at which authors and audience 'went live' simultaneously and events ended abruptly, allowing for no feedback and no 'panel chat'. This is a model which we will definitely use in future as it welcomes authors in to our midst and makes them feel that they have really been part of the festival community rather than simply appearing online.

iv. The value of promotional video

The Aberystwyth University-produced video which opened all our events, voiced by actor Aneirin Hughes, received a great deal of praise and prompted many event attenders – both audience and speakers – to say how much it had whetted their appetite for their visit to Aberystwyth next year.

The working group will be looking to include footage of the first physical festival - **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '22** - in Aberystwyth next year in the next online festival's promotional video.

b. What we would do differently

Our use of Facebook advertising does not seem to have paid dividends in terms of ticket registrations and we will need to find new ways to boost less popular events in future.

18. Looking forward to Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '22 in Aberystwyth

a) Registering Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Crime Cymru intends to run **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival** on a non-profit making basis, with all proceeds from each festival being ploughed back into preparations for the following year's festival. To make this clear to visitors, sponsors and supporters, we are in the process of registering as a CIO.

b) Securing Financial Backing for Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival' 22

Aberystwyth Town Council, who have already funded **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21** with a generous grant of £5,000 have pledged a further £5,000 to support **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '22** (the first physical festival in our biennial online/physical cycle) in the town in 2022.

Currently, we are still seeking approximately £30,000 in additional funding for costs as follows:

(Please note, not all of these are fully costed at this time, and there may be costs we have not anticipated):

Speakers at events

- Appearance fees - 60 speakers @ £150 per speaker - £9,000
- Accommodation – 60 speakers @£100 per speaker - £6,000
- Author packs – 60 packs to include tote bag, maps, local interest literature - £3.00 per speaker - £180

Subtotal - £15,180

Workshop facilitators

- 3 workshops 2 £350 per workshop - £1,050
- Accommodation @ £100 per workshop facilitator - £300

Subtotal - £1,350

Schools outreach speakers

- 3 authors for 1 whole day at a multi-primary school event @£200 per speaker per day - £600
- 2 authors for 1 event at each of the Aberystwyth secondary schools at £100 per event - £400

Subtotal - £1,000

Communications Officer – a paid post which covers all social media, festival newsletter, acting as first point of contact for all festival-related emails and supporting the voluntary hours put in by Crime Cymru working group members.

Subtotal: £5,000

Website maintenance

- Hosting and email services – £70
- Website maintenance - £45/month for 12 months (Sept 20 – March 21 - £540)

Subtotal - £610

Venue Hire

- 20 events @£100 per event - £2,000
- Green room for 4 days (3 days of festival plus set-up day) @ £150/day - £600
- Sundries for venues and green room eg hire of glasses and bottles for water - £200
- Provision of tea/coffee and snacks - £100

Subtotal - £2,900

PA equipment hire/Production costs

Estimated - £1,000

Stewarding

- Festival-branded steward t-shirts – 50 @£5 per shirt - £250
- Festival branded hi-vis jackets – 50 @£2.50 each - £125
- Water for stewards – 200 bottles at 50p per bottle £100

Subtotal - £475

Programmes

Estimated - £1,000

Insurance

To include Public Liability Insurance and insurance against festival not going ahead.

Notional - £2,500

Contingencies:

It would seem prudent to pitch contingencies at 10% of total overall costs.

Subtotal - £3,100

Grand total: £34,115

Assuming receipt of Aberystwyth Town Council's pledged £5,000, this leaves a shortfall of **£29,115**

Notes:

i) These calculations do not include our major public events, the Saturday night noson lawen and Sunday's champagne reception for the **Crime Cymru First Novel Prize** award ceremony. The former would be ticketed and, hopefully, self-financing, and the second may attract sponsorship.

ii) Revenue from ticket sales for **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival '22** would be used to fund the production of **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '23**.

a. Partner organisations

The working group is intending to continue to work with all the businesses and organisations already involved in **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival** and to forge links with many more, especially in the education sector, fulfilling one of our main aims: to run the festival very much for the local community's benefit.

b. Engaging the local community

Please see Appendix 7 – Values – for information on how we hope to involve all stakeholders, including the Aberystwyth community.

Appendix 1

Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online '21 Schedule

#1 Mon 26th April 6pm - **How Do You Like Your Crime?**

Crime Cymru's favourite book blogger Amy Williams interviews:
CWA Diamond Dagger winner, Martin Edwards
Canadian-Welsh member of Crime Cymru, Cathy Ace
Crime Cymru's Gail Williams

#2 Mon 26th April 8pm - **The Pembrokeshire Murders**

ITV Wales newsreader, Andrea Byrne, interviews:
Detective Inspector Steve Wilkins who brought to justice Wales's most prolific killer of recent times, and
Journalist Jonathan Hill who brought the story to the public.

#3 Tues 27th April 6pm - **From Crime Writer to Crime Publisher**

Gŵyl Crime Cymru Festival presents the launch of a brand new crime publisher, Diamond Crime.

#4 Tues 27th April 8pm - **It's Personal: When Character Becomes Plot –**

Crime Cymru founder member Alis Hawkins interviews:
Mari Hannah, award winner and internationally bestselling author
Emma Kavanagh, police psychologist and author of acclaimed thrillers,
Alison Layland, prizewinning Crime Cymru author

#5 Weds 28th April 6pm – **Crime in the World of Jane Austen**

Honno debut novelist, Annette Purdey Pugh, whose book **A Murder At Rosings** comes out in June, and crime novelist and Austen enthusiast, Lindsay Jayne Ashford, talk to Crime Cymru's own Amy Williams.

#6 Weds 28th April 8pm - **Debuts, Daggers and Diplomats –**

Crime Cymru's bestselling Philip Gwynne Jones in discussion with
Abir Mukherjee, multi-award winning writer of the post-WW1 Wyndham and Bannerjee novels,
Trevor Wood, CWA New Blood dagger winner
Crime Cymru member and Trevor's fellow debut author, Louise Mumford.

#7 Thurs 29th April 7pm - **Welsh Language Crime/Nofelau Ditectif Cymraeg.** Awdur Myfanwy Alexander yn trafod nofelau trosedd gyda dau o'r sgwennwyr nofelau trosedd gorau sy gyda ni yng Nghymru sef Gareth W Williams a Gwen Parrott.

#8 Fri 30th April 6pm– **Meet the Crime Cymru Authors.**

An intimate, limited-audience event in which Crime Cymru members introduce and read their own work.

#9 Fri 30th April 8pm - **Keeping Faith: The Making of an International Phenomenon**

Festival working group member Nellie Williams talks to:
Matthew Hall, Keeping Faith's creator and scriptwriter and
Alex Davies (Arthur in the series)

#10 Sat 1st May 1pm - Why Look Back? Historical Crime Fiction

Award-winning Crime Cymru author Katherine Stansfield interviews:
Elly Griffiths, international bestseller
S G MacLean, multi-CWA historical dagger winner

#11 Sat 1st May 4pm – The Plot's the Thing

Crime Cymru author Mark Ellis, talks to
Vaseem Khan, CWA dagger shortlistee
Sam Blake, author and organiser of Ireland's premier crime fiction festival, Murder One and
RG Adams, debut author and Crime Cymru member

#12 Sat 1st May 7pm - Passing on the Reacher Baton

Lee Child, multi-million bestselling author of the world famous Reacher series and Andrew
Child, Lee's brother talk to CWA dagger shortlisted thriller writer and Crime Cymru founder
member, Matt Johnson.

#13 Sun 2nd May 1pm - Series, Standalones and Beyond

Renowned interviewer and crime fiction festival organiser Jacky 'Dr Noir' Collins interviews:
Peter James, author of the multi-million selling Roy Grace series
Ragnar Jonasson, Iceland's Number-one seller and
Chris Lloyd, rising star of Crime Cymru and current CWA dagger shortlistee.

#14 Sun 2nd May 4pm - Crime Scenery: Can setting ever be a 'silent character'?

Doyenne of crime fiction festival Newcastle Nor Dr Jacky Collins talks to:
Yrsa Sigurdardottir, Queen of Icelandic Crime and
Alis Hawkins 2020 CWA dagger shortlistee, Crime Cymru & festival working group co-chair

#15 Sun 2nd May 7pm - Thriller, Killer Women

Book blogger Amy Williams talks to:
Clare Mackintosh, international bestseller and
BE Jones, Crime Cymru member

#16 Mon May 3rd 1pm - Horrid Histories: Gothic in Crime Fiction

Crime Cymru member, Thorne Moore, interviews:
E S Thomson historical crime writer and
Sarah Ward bestselling author of contemporary crime, now branching into historical crime

#17 Mon May 3rd 4pm - Putting on an International Crime Fiction Festival: What Could Possibly Go Wrong?

Festival working group co-chairs Alis Hawkins and Matt Johnson in conversation with
Newcastle Noir founder, Dr Jacky Collins.

#18 Mon May 3rd 7pm - Crime novels: How much fact, how much fiction?

Working group co-chair Alis Hawkins interviews:
M W Craven, bestselling crime author and CWA Gold Dagger winner and

Appendix 2

Post Festival Feedback from Speakers

Your contribution to **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online** means so much to us and we want to say an enormous Thank You for helping us make our first event such a huge success. Thanks also for being willing to give us feedback – it's much appreciated.

Please rate the following from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent) by underlining the relevant number.

1. How would you rate the quality and amount of information you were given in order to prepare for your event:

1 2 3 4 5

Do you have any advice as to how we might do better:

2. How would you rate our choice of Zoom and Youtube Live as platforms through which to present Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online?

1 2 3 4 5

Would you prefer to see us use a different platform? If so, could you briefly tell us how it might improve our participants' and audience experience:

3. How would you rate working with HAKA, our production team?

1 2 3 4 5

Any comments gratefully received:

4. How would you rate the moderation at your event? *(Please note, this will not be communicated to your panel's moderator. As a working group we will be evaluating moderators separately. We're just looking for quotable numbers!)*

1 2 3 4 5

If you have any thoughts in general on what makes a good moderator, we'd be very grateful to hear them:

5. How easy did you find it to communicate with your moderator:

1 2 3 4 5

If you have any comments on how we could improve communication, that would be great:

6. How would you rate your contact with the organisers of the festival, Alis, Matt or Nellie?

1 2 3 4 5

Do you have any ideas on how we could improve communication with organisers if necessary?

7. How would you rate our social media coverage of Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival overall?

1 2 3 4 5

If you have any suggestions on how we might be able to improve our social media coverage, please let us know:

8. How would you rate our social media coverage of your particular event?

1 2 3 4 5

If you have any suggestions on how we might be able to improve our social media coverage of individual events, please let us know:

9. How would you rate the overall organisation of Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival?

1 2 3 4 5

Any suggestions on organisation gratefully received:

10. How likely are you to recommend Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival to other authors? (1 = not at all, 5 = I'm ringing them now)

1 2 3 4 5

If you have any comments on authors you'd like to see at **Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival** in Aberystwyth next year, let us know:

11. What were the aspects of your participation in Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online that were most positive for you?

Appendix 3

Post festival feedback from speakers results

Questions	Rating scale 1=poor 5=excellent				
	1	2	3	4	5
	Number of respondents scoring each number				
1. How would you rate the quality and amount of information you were given in order to prepare for your event?				1	19
2. How would you rate our choice of Zoom and Youtube Live as platforms through which to present Gwyl CRIME CYMRU Festival?					20
3. How would you rate working with HAKA, our production team?				1	19
4. How would you rate the moderation at your event?				1	19
5. How easy did you find it to communicate with your moderator?					20
6. How would you rate your contact with the organisers, Alis, matt and Nellie?					20
7. How would you rate our social media coverage of your event?			1	1	18
8. How would you rate our social media coverage of Gwyl CRIME CYMRU Festival?			1	1	18
9. How would you rate the overall organisation of Gwyl CRIME CYMRU Festival?				1	19
10. How likely are you to recommend Gwyl CRIME CYMRU Festival to other authors?			1		19
11. What were the aspects of your participation in Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online that were most positive for you?	For narrative responses see Appendix 5				
Total number of authors who responded out of 31 polled (Crime Cymru authors were not polled to avoid bias)	20				

Appendix 4

Responses to question 11 on Authors' Feedback questionnaire: *What were the aspects of your participation in Gŵyl CRIME CYMRU Festival Online that were most positive for you?*

The general friendliness and the sense that everyone was working together. It was great to feel that the organisers genuinely enjoyed our panel and that showed in the social media coverage etc.

Friendly and inspiring. I loved it. Am thrilled to have been invited and will always support this festival

The people - as is usually the case. Thought that it was great to talk with others, there was a good mix of specialisations, backgrounds and ages.

I LOVED IT ALL. MY CO-GUEST AUTHOR, ALIS OUR MODERATOR. THE WHOLE EXPERIENCE WAS FIRST CLASS. THE PRODUCTION WAS TOP-DRAWER. THE TEAM FRIENDLY AND HELPFUL.

Meeting all the Welsh crime authors/community. A real sense of building this community. Being part of such a fun, well-run panel.

Like every author, I'm always keen to meet new readers. Even though I've been published almost ten years and won many awards, I've never been asked to appear in Wales. Thank you for giving me a new audience. I can't wait to do it in person next year.

I have a lifelong love of Wales and have spent a great deal of time there so it was good to feel a bit of connection with Wales and the Welsh given that I've not been able to visit for 18 months

I enjoyed watching other events. Being pals with the author I was appearing with always helps and I was lucky there.

I think a really good festival like this is long overdue in Wales and Aberystwyth is the perfect location.

Meeting some lovely people. Being at some great events. Feeling part of something genuinely exciting. Feeling very, very proud that Wales now has a festival to call its own. Quite a lot of hiraeth! Perhaps most of all the genuine feeling of love, support and good humour that ran through the whole event. If we can duplicate that in Aberystwyth then it really will be an event to remember...

Connection with other authors, supportive experience for my first author event.

Meeting authors I haven't met before and participating in a Welsh festival. I loved it

The event itself was genuinely fun – it felt like an afternoon in congenial company, but audience feedback was possibly the best thing, and highlighted a previously unguessed at benefit of the digital festival for me – that it can reach readers from a very wide range of geographical locations. Tremendous exposure as an author.

I felt well informed from start to finish and everyone was incredibly enthusiastic and welcoming. It was an absolute pleasure to take part and very much looking forward to the real thing.

Love meeting new authors and it was really lovely to have a Welsh author on the panel, as well as a Welsh moderator, gave the festival a unique sense of place.

Very inclusive, good sized audiences.

BEST TECH I HAVE EXPERIENCED IN THESE EVENTS. FIRST CLASS PRODUCTION.

Appendix 5

Festival Attendee Feedback Survey

Q1. How Many of the festival events did you attend live?

0 1 – 5 6 – 10 11 – 15 16 – 18

Q2 . How many of the festival events did you watch as a Youtube recording?

0 1 – 5 6 – 10 11 – 15 16 – 18

Q3. How would you rate the events you watched?

1 = poor 5 = excellent

Q4. How would you rate the performance of the technology (Zoom and Youtube Live) used for the events

1 = poor 5 = no issues

Q5. How would you rate the Eventbrite ticket-booking process?

1 = poor 5 = no problems

Q6. If you have visited the Gwyl Crime Cymru Festival website as part of your interest in this digital festival, what was your impression of the website?

1 = I didn't like it 5 = easy to navigate, I loved it

Q7. How did you hear about the festival?

Author website	Author social media
Festival website	Festival social media
Radio feature	Newspaper feature
On-line news feature	Bookshop
Facebook chat	Twitter chat
Instagram	Other (please specify)

Q8. Do you hope to attend the physical Gwyl Crime Cymru Festival at Aberystwyth in 2022?
(Please use comments section to say where you would be travelling from.)

Q9. Were you able to make use of the partner bookshop link to purchase books?

Q10. Did Gwyl Crime Cymru Digital Festival inspire you to learn more about Wales, Welsh crime writers and their books?

Appendix 6

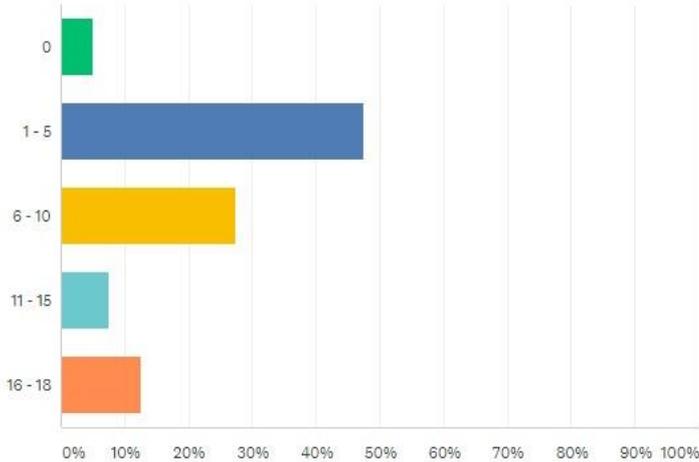
Festival Attendee Feedback Survey Results

Q1

 [Customize](#) [Save as](#) 

How many of the festival events did you attend live?

Answered: 40 Skipped: 0



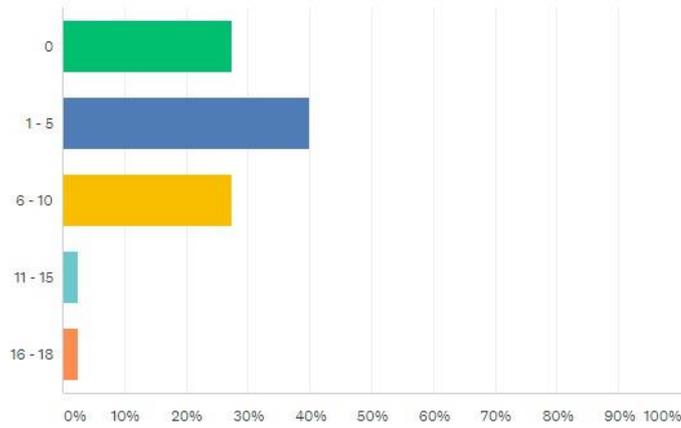
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
0	5.00% 2
1 - 5	47.50% 19
6 - 10	27.50% 11
11 - 15	7.50% 3

Q2

Customize Save as

How many of the festival events did you watch as a YouTube recording?

Answered: 40 Skipped: 0



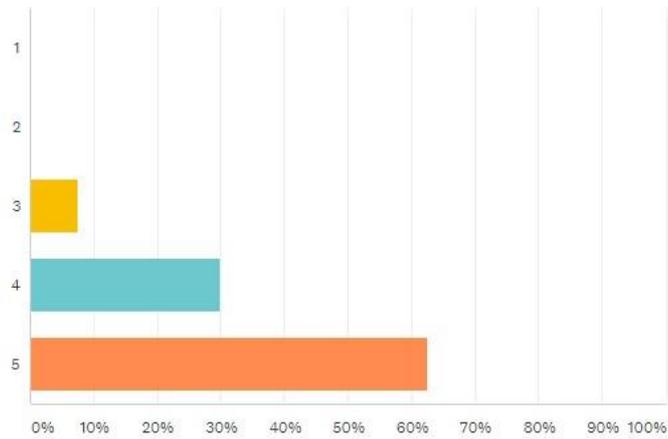
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ 0	27.50% 11
▼ 1 - 5	40.00% 16
▼ 6 - 10	27.50% 11
▼ 11 - 15	2.50% 1
▼ 16 - 18	2.50% 1

Q3

 Customize  Save as ▼

How would you rate the events you watched? (1 = poor, 5 = excellent)

Answered: 40 Skipped: 0



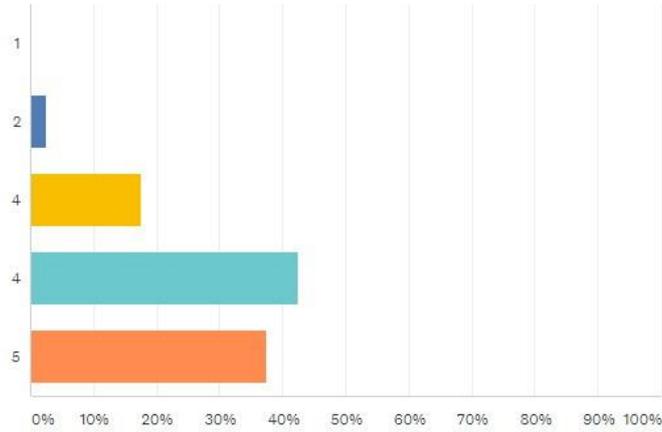
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ 1	0.00% 0
▼ 2	0.00% 0
▼ 3	7.50% 3
▼ 4	30.00% 12
▼ 5	62.50% 25

Q4

 Customize  Save as ▼

How would you rate the performance of the technology (Zoom and YouTube live) used for the events? (1 = poor, 5 = No issues)

Answered: 40 Skipped: 0



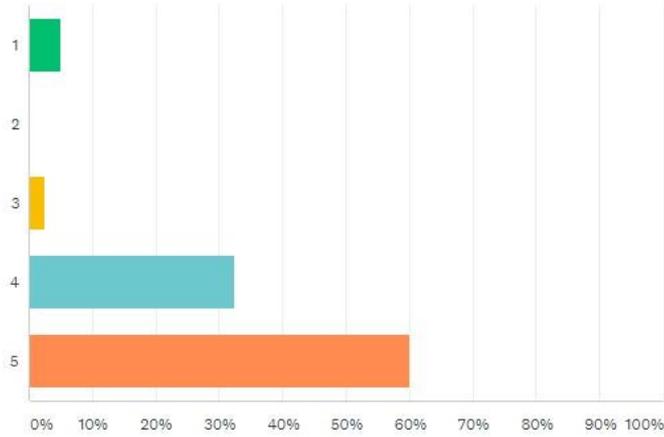
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ 1	0.00% 0
▼ 2	2.50% 1
▼ 4	17.50% 7
▼ 4	42.50% 17
▼ 5	37.50% 15

Q5

 [Customize](#) [Save as](#) 

How would you rate the Eventbrite ticket booking process? (1 = poor, 5 = no problems)

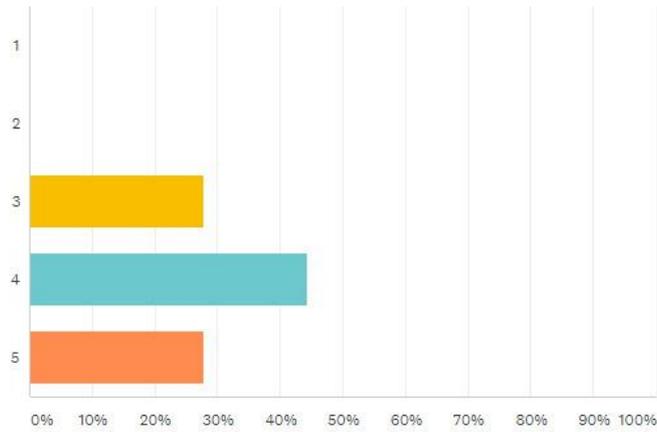
Answered: 40 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ 1	5.00% 2
▼ 2	0.00% 0
▼ 3	2.50% 1
▼ 4	32.50% 13
▼ 5	60.00% 24

If you visited the Gwyl Crime Cymru Festival website as part of your interest in this digital festival, what was your impression of the website? (1 = didn't like it, 5 = easy to navigate, loved it)

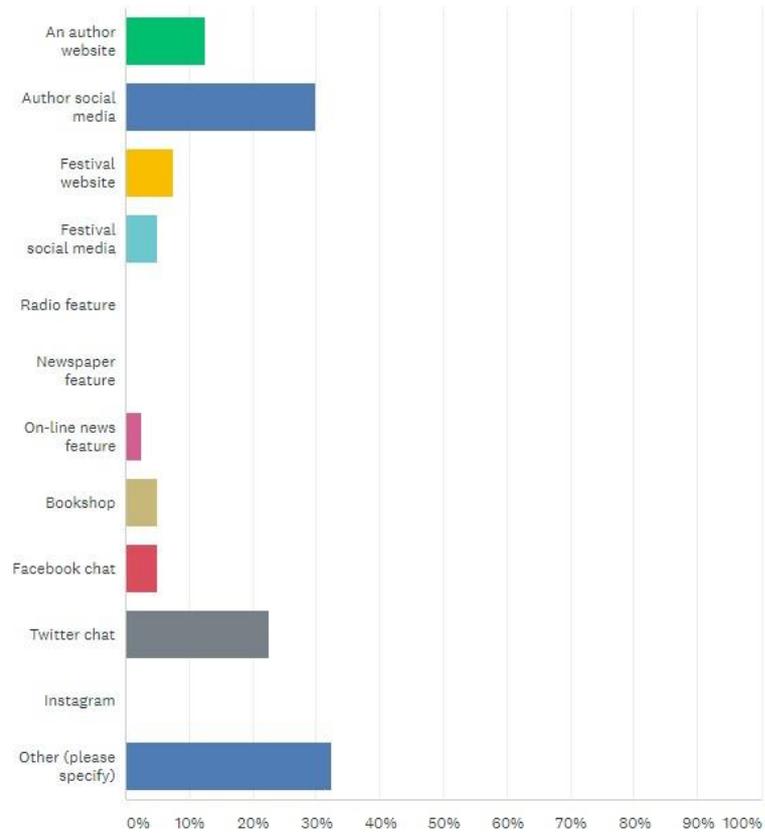
Answered: 36 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ 1	0.00% 0
▼ 2	0.00% 0
▼ 3	27.78% 10
▼ 4	44.44% 16
▼ 5	27.78% 10

How did you hear about the festival?

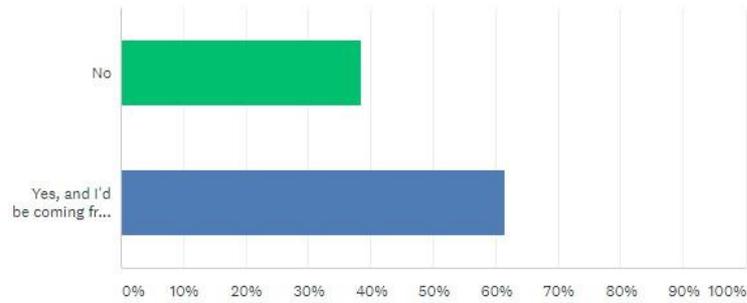
Answered: 40 Skipped: 0





Do you hope to attend the physical Gwyl Crime Cymru Festival at Aberystwyth in 2022? (Please use comments section to say where you would be travelling from)

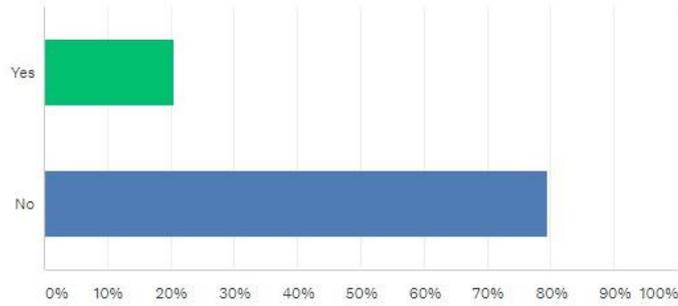
Answered: 39 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
▾ No		38.46%	15
▾ Yes, and I'd be coming from ...	Responses	61.54%	24

Were you able to make use of the partner bookshop links to purchase book(s)?

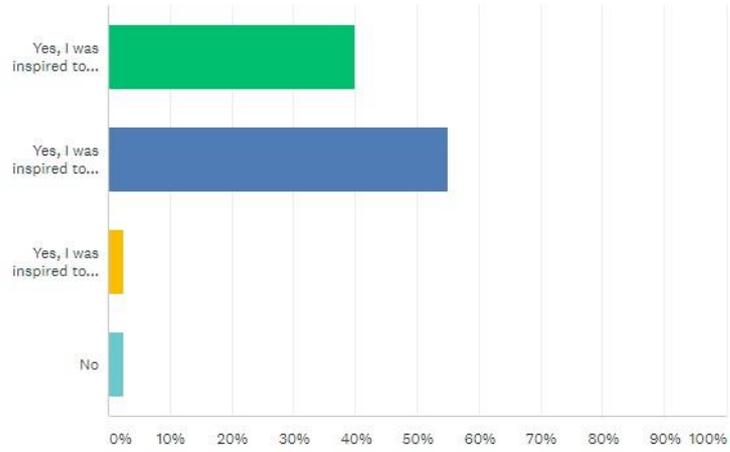
Answered: 39 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	20.51% 8
No	79.49% 31

Did the Gwyl Crime Cymru Digital festival inspire you to learn more about Wales, Welsh crime writers and their books?

Answered: 40 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes, I was inspired to both visiting Wales AND learn more about Welsh crime writers	40.00% 16
Yes, I was inspired to learn more about Welsh Crime Writers	55.00% 22
Yes, I was inspired to visit Wales	2.50% 1
No	2.50% 1

Appendix 7

Values as applied to Aberystwyth stakeholders

Businesses in Aberystwyth	
Collaboration	<p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and work with proactive local business groups eg Menter Aberystwyth Invite a member of the local business network to attend working group meetings as appropriate. Work with local businesses as sponsors to mutual benefit of both
Inclusivity	<p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To include as wide a range as possible of businesses as possible in our planning and activities and offer all the chance to be involved in some way or another (sponsorship, help in kind etc)
Sustainability	<p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek to build working relationships to ensure the sustainability of the festival in the long term Employ Aberystwyth firms where possible to promote sustainability of individual businesses and promote sustainable growth in Aber business sector
Authenticity	<p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that in any working relationship, the vision of both the festival, Crime Cymru and the business concerned are upheld and supported. To ensure that the Welsh language is always represented in all dealings with businesses, both verbally where possible and on all festival literature.

Aberystwyth residents	
Collaboration	<p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore ways to have a collaborative opening event involve local people. To work with secondary schools to develop a festival logo To hold a public meeting about the festival To publish as much written material as possible in various media – website, print media, social media – informing residents about the festival and soliciting their involvement

Inclusivity	<p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All printed materials and festival website to be bilingual • All events to allow participation in Welsh if required, with Welsh speakers at each event to translate questions or comments • To hold as many events as possible at the festival which appeal to as wide a range of people as possible. • Local disability groups to be canvassed to advise on inclusive practice
Sustainability	<p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Festival to be biennial to avoid 'festival fatigue' • Those who offer rooms for rent should be used to house speakers as well as hotels • 'Green' alternatives to printed materials to be used, eg QR code-read programme app for phones) • Environmentally friendly solutions to be used wherever possible to avoid increased litter and waste
Authenticity	<p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aber residents should be involved in decisions on how Aber is represented in literature