

## Medieval Girl - AD 1350

1000 year ago there were few towns in Wales. However, the next 300 years saw the population double and the creation of many of the towns we know and live in today.

Even though the population doubled between 1050 and 1300 only 10 per cent of people lived in towns. In 1300 it is recorded that 2,200 people lived in Cardiff. The increase in population meant there was a need for a more intensive use of land. Forests were now cleared and more villages appeared which resulted in a change in the social structure. Crime was now an offence against the ruler rather than against the tribe or family and money was quickly replacing bartering.

In places like **Cosmeston in the Vale of Glamorgan**, the land was organised into a series of knights' fees, each capable of maintaining a mounted warrior and supported by a manorial system sustained by villeins who were often incomers.

This was the time when Wales based its trade on cattle and sheep, which would dominate the economy until the Industrial Revolution. Drovers took cattle across Wales to the great fairs of the English cities, and cattle sales became the chief way of introducing ready money into the countryside.

From 1070 to 1282, English and French lords and kings and their descendants were engaged in a constant struggle with the ruling Welsh lords for power in Wales. However with the death of Llywelyn ein Llyw Olaf, the last Prince of Wales in 1282, Wales became linked to the organizational systems of England, which was to include the Church, for centuries.

The Welsh climate deteriorated after 1300. Wet summers, disease among domestic animals and soil exhaustion caused agricultural problems. By 1320, the population was in decline and would not return to the level seen in 1300 for another 250 years.

## Links

[Cosmeston Medieval Village in the Vale of Glamorgan](#)

[http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/enjoying/parks\\_gardens/cosmeston/cosmeston\\_medieval\\_village.aspx](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/enjoying/parks_gardens/cosmeston/cosmeston_medieval_village.aspx)

[Wales in the Age of the Princes](#)

[http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/heritage/medieval\\_exhibition/introduction.htm](http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/heritage/medieval_exhibition/introduction.htm)

[http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/castles\\_of\\_wales](http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/castles_of_wales)

[http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/owain\\_glyndwr\\_ks2](http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/owain_glyndwr_ks2)

[Information on Castles of Britain](#) [www.castlewales.com/jlthst.html](http://www.castlewales.com/jlthst.html)

[www.cpat.org.uk/educate/leaflets/celts/celts.htm](http://www.cpat.org.uk/educate/leaflets/celts/celts.htm)