

2018 Post-Event Thank You

Proud Ness was a project to take the rainbow flag around the Highlands with OUT-Reach stalls at Thurso, Portree, Ullapool, Avimore, and Fort William, with a final main event in Inverness. The initial funding application was facilitated by the Equality Network, who lent us their gazebo for the OUT-Reach stalls.

The Proud Ness main event on the 6 October 2018 far exceeded our expectations or original planning. The support we received was overwhelming and was beyond anything we thought could be possible. The estimate for the number of people in the parade on the day varies from 2000 up to 6000.

The Proud Ness main event could not have happened without the support from many organisations and individuals.

Eden Court, whose help with the initial planning, advice and planning for the stalls, talks, and entertainment, and dynamically dealing with the unprecedented numbers that appeared was invaluable.

The Highland Council's support with the Parade planning, authorisation, and road closures was exemplary, especially with the changes we had to make to the starting point due to unfolding events. Flying the rainbow flag from the town house was the icing on the cake.

We cannot thank enough Gerry Reynolds, Inverness Events Manager, for jumping in at the last minute to ensure an incident free parade and enabling the use of the Northern Meeting Park for the speeches.

Thanks must also go to the Reverend Peter Nimmo from the Church of Scotland, Elaine Mead, Chief Executive of the NHS Highland, and James Mackenzie-Blackman, Chief Executive of Eden Court for their enthusiastically received speeches.

Many others helped in small and large ways: the police, volunteer stewards (some were last minute volunteers), the public, and the shops in Inverness for making it such a memorable day.

The Proud Ness committee consisted of ten individuals, all volunteers with full time jobs, none of us special. For some of us, the last couple of weeks has been a fantastic nightmare which included reviewing our plans, dealing with the many queries, issues and problems – and all with the uncertainty of the number who would be on the parade. Due to the workload, we were unable to reply to many queries, so please accept our apologies if we did not respond.

We would like to give a shout out to the Hebridean Pride who, from all reports, also had a very successful day. Congratulations to them!

Planning for Proud Ness 2019 will start soon, although we have no idea how to top this year or if we will get funding.

Proud Ness Committee
8 October 2018