



www.gay-ness.org.uk

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- [Girlzone - Inverness](#)
- [LGBT Youth Scotland](#)
- [Scotsgay](#)
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VAGINA MONOLOGUES

Not specifically LGBT, but one for the ladies! The Vagina Monologues are coming to Inverness for 3 nights (7, 8 and 9 June). Stars include Joyce Falconer (Roisin from River City), Nikki Sanderson (Candice from Coronation Street) and Eastenders very own Jessie Wallace. Visit the [Eden Court](#) web site for more details.

Highland LGBT Forum

Making the LGBT community more visible in the Highlands

Newsletter May/June 2010

Welcome

Welcome to the brand new email newsletter of the Highland LGBT Forum!

We've recently revamped our web site: www.gay-ness.org.uk so take a look and put it in your Favourites.

Check out the [Events page](#) on our site and if you have anything you want us to add, just send it to forum@gay-ness.org.uk

HIGHLAND LGBT FORUM

The new committee is Mike Kirby (Chair), Joanne Mackenzie-Winters (Secretary), Eveline Bronsveld (Treasurer) and 3 committee members. If you are interested in getting involved, please get in touch with us at

forum@gay-ness.org.uk

We have lots of plans and some of the committee are going to Edinburgh to see what ideas we can get from LGBT Youth Scotland, Gay Men's Health and the LGBT Centre for Health and Wellbeing. We'll have a full report on that in our newsletter next month.

One of the Forum's current projects is an LGBT community safety leaflet which we are working on this year.

There will be regular e-newsletters, so if you have anything you want including - just let us know.

Make a note in your diary for **Saturday 23 October!** The Highland LGBT Forum is organising a **Halloween Party** with a whole evening packed with live entertainment. The full line up is to be announced in June!

SPEAK OUT HIGHLANDS & ISLANDS

The [Equality Network](#) and THT are hosting meetings across the Highlands and Islands to bring together LGBT people to talk about how you can build new social groups in your area and how best to engage with service providers to ensure services meet the needs of LGBT people. For details of the venues, contact Scott Cuthbertson on 07020 933 952 or email scott@equality-network.org. Caroline Snow of THT (Inverness) will be joining Scott on tour around the Highlands.

- Wick - Monday 24th May, 7pm - 9pm at Ackergill Tower
- Elgin - Tuesday 25th May, 7pm - 9pm at Elgin Library
- Fort William - Wednesday 26th May, 7pm - 9pm at the Nevis Centre
- Stornoway - Friday 28th May, 6.30pm - 8.30pm at An Lanntair

PINK PICNIC

Thomas Close who runs the Salsa Ness LGBT-friendly dancing classes has been working with the new THT youth group and has come up with the great idea of having an LGBT gathering at the Ness Islands every other Saturday, starting on Saturday 29 May. This will be from 1pm - 4pm. Meet at the circular seating area and remember to bring your picnic basket! All ages of the LGBT community are welcome. Contact Thomas - mobile 07733 758 309 / or email salsaness@yahoo.co.uk

Faith

Local members of the LGBT community have recently been talking about faith issues with Reverend Peter Nimmo of **Old High St Stephen's Church** in Inverness. They were also invited to two education events with members of the congregation about same-sex relationships and the ministry.

We'll have a full report on this in our next newsletter, but meanwhile you can check out Peter's blog and see Mike Kirby's story which he read out at the events - [click for details](#)



www.hatefreehighland.org

LGBT Youth Scotland has a text message support service - simply text "info" to 0778 148 17 88 and a trained youth worker will text you back.



Breathing Space phonenumber 0800 83 85 87
Available 24 hours at weekends (6pm Friday - 6am Monday) and 6pm - 2am on weekdays (Monday - Thursday).

SAMARITANS

Samaritans phonenumber 08457 90 90 90
Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
You can also email them at jo@samaritans.org.

SALSA NESS

Salsa Ness now offers LGBT-friendly dancing at the James Cameron Centre (Dalneigh) on Thursdays from 6pm - 8pm. Costs £6 per or £10 per fortnight.

Visit Salsa Ness on [Bebo](#) or [view the poster](#). Contact Thomas P. Close - mobile 07733 758 309 or email salsaness@yahoo.co.uk

GAYDAR

Reports from the Metropolitan Police service in London have shown an emerging crime trend on Gaydar and other chat sites. Men are contacted by IM and begin conversations, then they are encouraged to provide images of themselves. A meet is arranged but unfortunately on attending, it is found to be a group of criminals who demand money in return for staying silent. If the men do not capitulate, their images are posted to their wives and family or posted on web sites. On occasions there has been an element of violence.

Please take all the usual safety precautions when chatting online and meeting up with people you don't know. If in doubt, look up the Northern Constabulary profile on Gaydar and ask them for advice. You can also use the [Hate Free Highland](#) web site if you wish to report something anonymously.

SNN

The **Scottish Netreach Network** (SNN) is a group of agencies in Scotland that work with gay and bisexual men. Workers and volunteers offer online information on a wide range of topics including HIV, sexual health, relationships, safer sex, and coming out. It is not a counselling service. The SNN can also report gay hate crimes to the police on your behalf.

The SNN comprises six partner organisations in Scotland (Healthy Gay Scotland, Gay Men's Health, LGBT Youth Scotland, THT Scotland, ROAM, Open Road).

To contact the SNN online, [visit their web site](#). You can also [find them on Gaydar](#).

PRESS RELEASE

Currently three soap operas: Coronation Street, EastEnders and Emmerdale, are running stories of gay and lesbian relationships and the problems surrounding them.

As well as the individuals themselves, family and friends are affected. The Highland LGBT Forum welcomes the well-researched storylines and the sensitive issues that they raise. On behalf of the Forum, Chairman Mike Kirby said 'A lot of people will relate to what they are watching and may well be suffering with similar issues.'

With this in mind the Forum contacted helplines that are professionally trained to advise and would like anyone that is feeling affected by issues surrounding their, or someone close to them's sexuality, to pick up the telephone and get some help.

Breathing Space telephone lines are open Monday to Thursday from 6pm to 2am and from 6pm on Friday until 6am on Monday. Their number is 0800 83 85 87.

The **Samaritans** telephone lines are open constantly on 08457 90 90 90.

Visit the Forum's [Health links page](#) for more info.

DONATIONS

Highland Home Carers has kindly made a donation of £100 to the Highland LGBT Forum. HHC is registered with the Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care to provide Care at Home and Housing Support Services. They provide a flexible, quality home care and support service, enabling individuals to remain in their own home with assistance in maintaining their current lifestyle and promoting independence where possible.

The Highland LGBT Forum is a registered charity. If you'd like to make a regular donation, you can download the [standing order mandate](#) from our web site. Simply fill in your bank details and return the form to us. We will then process it for you.

THT IN INVERNESS

On **Tuesday 8 June**, THT (Inverness) is presenting an evening at the Crown Court Hotel asking what the local LGBT community would like THT to do for them. The event will be from 6.30 - 9pm (includes buffet). Phone 01463 711 585 for more info or email info.highland@tht.org.uk Open Door Afternoons at THT (Waterloo Place, Inverness) are on Tuesdays from 2pm - 4pm for anyone who is LGBT and wishes to chat to staff about any issues.

GIRLZONE

GirlZone is a friendly group which meets for lunch twice a month on the first Saturday and third Friday. All women are welcome whether you identify as lesbian, bi, trans or whether don't like labels at all! The next lunch dates are:

Saturday 5 June: from 1pm at Wetherspoons in Church Street.

Friday 18 June from 12.30pm - 2pm in the restaurant upstairs in Debenhams (take the lift to the very top floor in the Eastgate shopping centre, don't go to the cafe on the ground floor!).

If you are new, look out for the shiny blue box on the table or contact Joanne at girlzone@gay-ness.org.uk if you wish to be met in advance. Please note: Joanne is away on holiday for the first week in June.

SWANS

The Swans of Scotland is an independent group which meets at the Beaufort Hotel in Inverness on the fourth Thursday of the month for transgender / transvestite / transexual people. [Visit their web site](#) for more details.

HIGHLAND RAINBOW FOLK

Launched in February 2009, the Highland Rainbow Folk holds monthly meetings for all ages in Inverness.

On 26 February 2010, the group held a very successful special event for LGBT History Month at Inverness Town House. This was attended by people from the Highland Council, NHS, THT, Northern Constabulary and local care homes. Members of the group took part in storytelling and presentations which were very well received by the audience. The new Highland Rainbow Folk information booklet was launched at the event.



Highland Rainbow Folk

See a photo of the group in the [March edition of Scotsgay online](#). The event was covered in an article by the Inverness Courier - [click here to view](#).

This is a joint working group of Age Scotland (combining Age Concern and Help the Aged in Scotland) and Terrence Higgins Trust, working to raise awareness of issues facing older lesbians, gay men, bisexual men and women and transgender people. Contact Suzy Gentle - Age Concern and Help the Aged in Scotland (tel: 01309 673455 / 07920540241). Email: suzy.gentle@agescotland.org.uk

PINK CASTLE

The **Pink Castle Philosophy Club** has a new venue at Nico's Bar (Glen Mhor Hotel), Ness Bank, Inverness. The club meets on the second Tuesday of every month (except June when Morgan will be away on holiday!). The next meeting is Tuesday 13 July at 7pm. For further info, contact Morgan on 01463 751258 / 07745 930383 or email morgan@tramstop.org