Annual Report
2014-2015

Supporting Women to Make Change Since 2013
Registered Charity No. 1154290
Company No. 08707011
I am delighted to be the new Patron of Kyra Women’s Project. I know how much Kyra does to support women in the York area and am pleased to be able to raise awareness of the work done by the team.

Many women experience times in their lives when they are down and, at these times, they need to be helped up with a gentle hand. Kyra does this, not just in the support groups provided but also by running training courses, social activities, individual work, providing advice and giving that very important listening ear.

Kyra’s philosophy of supporting women to make positive change means that women can feel empowered and can be mutually supportive.

I’m looking forward to supporting and getting to know this fantastic charity more.

With best Wishes

Penelope Wilton

Penelope
Welcome to Kyra’s Annual Report for 2014/15. During our second year I have been amazed at how much we have grown and how quickly the word has spread about what Kyra does. We have had a lot of change and many successes.

In May, we moved to the Central Methodist Church on St Saviourgate. We are grateful to the church community for helping Kyra turn the drama of losing our previous premises into the opportunity to expand in a new home. After a brilliant “make over” effort by volunteers, family and friends we opened up a wonderful welcoming space for women. Old and new members commented how friendly the new Kyra felt. We can now run throughout the week and we have room for several activities at a time.

In 2015, registered member numbers increased from 99 at the end of last year to 248. In the first half of this year alone, we had over 1,068 visits; that is 42 women per week accessing Kyra’s courses and activities. Since moving to the CMC that number has more than doubled to 94 women per week. We are forecasting a further increase to over 100 women per week. In response to requests from women, we have provided additional activities and tried to offer support where there may be gaps in local provision. Amongst other things, this year we have: developed support for women with pre and post-natal issues; increased counselling provision; developed art and gardening projects; and supported carers.

More than 23 volunteers provide approximately 9,600 hours of volunteering time per year and are the heart of Kyra’s success. The kindness and positivity they show ensures that new members feel supported and comfortable. We have volunteers who not only work directly with our members but also provide administration, fundraising and outreach support, all of whom have been vital in helping Kyra grow.

With more activity this year, Kyra’s financial responsibilities expanded. The York community has responded with great kindness and generosity. We are truly grateful to every person and organisation who has supported us financially and in kind. Without this level of generosity Kyra would not have been able to blossom the way it has. We have hopes to extend our opening hours and support women who are unable to come during the day.

I would personally like to thank the trustees and volunteers for their dedication and selflessness. The time, skill and compassion given by everyone involved has allowed Kyra to achieve so much in such a short time. The Kyra Project is truly inspirational.

No act of kindness, however small, is ever wasted

Cath Harvey
Chair of Trustees - Kyra Women’s Project
What our members say

“What particularly appeals to me about Kyra is that women from all walks of life are welcome, you don’t need a ‘label’ or particular issue to attend. Kyra has given me the opportunity to meet people socially in a safe friendly environment.

I also feel like I am accepted for who I am which is very important for me. Too often in the past I feel I’ve been judged because of my past, my mental health issues and more recently because of my physical disability. Everyone I have met at Kyra has been really supportive and encouraging. I have gained confidence both personally and socially. I have also made new friends.” J.

Ann’s experience

“I recently attended one-to-one stress management counselling sessions to help me deal with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder following breast cancer and then a stroke during treatment. The stroke resulted in significant brain trauma, lessening my abilities to read, write or count accurately, coupled with chronic memory loss and poor balance.

From the day I walked through the door at Kyra I have felt a valued person in my own right. The counsellor was welcoming and immediately inspired my trust as a client. She treated me with compassion and professional skill. Christina worked with me on visualisation (describing scenarios and alternative outcomes) to help me learn and remember things. This has been very positive for me.

I no longer feel overwhelmed in the bank or supermarket where I used to be terrified. Using the techniques I have been taught, I can now regain control of what happens next without ending up muddled and distressed.”

A. September 2015
Kyra Women’s Project has a simple but effective model. We are the only independent women’s project in York and we feel this unique approach is one of the attractions of Kyra. Women come to us as women – not as someone with a mental health problem, as an offender, as someone isolated or as someone in recovery. We try to make sure that we have the services available to meet the challenges women face, enabling them to see the skills and assets that they have.

Sounds easy- but it’s been a very busy year. The dedication of our volunteers who consistently go above and beyond what we ask never ceases to amaze and inspire me.

Kyra continues to grow and the number of women accessing the service surpasses all our expectations.

We have extended our range of services. At the beginning of the year we offered nine activities and programmes, currently we have thirty five. This is only the beginning. We continue to listen carefully to the women who have identified further areas of need which we will endeavour to meet. We are in the process of planning activities and programmes, expanding our portfolio of services, provision and delivery even further. This is always a challenge. As no one receives a salary, we are totally reliant on volunteers giving of their time and expertise, whilst ensuring that Kyra both belongs to and reflects our community. Keeping our costs down in this way allows us to offer the majority of our services for free, and although this will be challenging it is something I would like to maintain in the future.

Our partnership working is strong and supportive. We are appreciative to all who give us the backing we need, often at very short notice. We have developed our networks and have many more services referring to us and making use of the opportunities we offer.

A lot of the credit and thanks goes to the women we work with for accessing our services, participating fully, being honest and open and supporting each other thereby giving and getting in equal amounts often at times of significant stress and anxiety.

As ever, there remain significant challenges, but Kyra is growing in confidence and continuing to strive to be the ‘best’. We are embracing opportunities as they arise, we are doing well and want to build on these successes moving into 2015/16.

Thank you one and all, for support, trust and inspiration to enable Kyra Women’s Project to reach her second birthday.

Best wishes,

Yvonne
Our Move

We had outgrown our Marygate premises and knew it was time to actively look for a new home. This became necessary slightly earlier than we had anticipated due to notice being unexpectedly given on the last premises. York people were wonderful offering us rooms and temporary accommodation. We desperately wanted Kyra to be under one roof and a long and arduous search began. Kyra moved into her new home in St Saviourgate on May 5th 2015. There was a lot of work to do, but our amazing volunteers, friends and family made it happen and we are extremely grateful for all the help and support we received in redecorating, furnishing and equipping the rooms. Our thanks also go to the staff at the Central Methodist Church for their help and co-operation in adapting to the needs of Kyra.

Rosa

The ‘ROSA’ project – ‘Rebuilding Ourselves Through Art’ was a six-month project, funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. The project brought together women of all ages and backgrounds and introduced them to sketching, clay modelling, working with plaster of Paris, creating wire and wooden structures – all by taking inspiration from the natural environment. Many of the women commented that when they were working on their art, they were totally absorbed for those three hours and forgot about any feelings of isolation and worry and felt just in the moment. One participant, Helen, said: “I really enjoyed Sally’s classes. She was great fun and enthusiastic and came up with unusual and engaging projects. She certainly brought the creative streak out in me, which I did not know I had. I could just about manage a stick man, before her excellent tuition!” Many thanks to Foundation, who initially gave us the use of their garden as a venue in which to work, and as a source of inspiration. However, when we moved into new premises, the project moved with us and we worked in the Kyra courtyard, where bee hotels, butterflies and artwork now adorn the courtyard walls. Although the project finished in October 2015, it has left a legacy in the form of a group of enthusiastic members who are keen to continue to work on developing the courtyard. Thank you to all involved – especially to our inspirational tutor, Sally.
Face of York
In June 2015, Kyra took part in a city-wide initiative, led by York Council, called ‘The Face of York’. Women came to a one-day workshop at Kyra where they were guided in creating drawings, etchings and collages of faces that meant something to them in the city. Some selected immediate family members and others famous historical figures from York’s past. The aim was to produce portraits of people with a connection to York to create ‘a visual census of the city’. Amongst those attending were two mothers and daughters. Lots of fun and enjoyment was had and unknown creativity released! We were proud to go to City Screen later in the year, where all of the artwork was exhibited, and to pick out the artwork created at Kyra.

I’m Simona Manni, an independent filmmaker based in York. I discovered Kyra about a year ago and was immediately impressed with the quality, warmth, and range of the support provided to women. Shortly afterwards, while facing a difficult time in my personal life, I also joined Kyra’s counselling service, which helped me immensely in sorting those issues. So I had the chance to have first-hand experience of how Kyra can help women in vulnerable situations and how accessible it is, compared to many other services in the area, which have extremely long waiting lists or are financially inaccessible to many. I have agreed to create a film about Kyra, to capture the impact the organisation has on women’s lives and the need for its services.

The aims of the video will be to be used for fundraising, screened at events as presentation for Kyra in order to attract investments and support, but also shared online to encourage women who may need support to join Kyra.
The compassion you show to the people we serve is an inspiration to all. You treat everyone with respect and kindness, no matter what the situation is. We all know how stressful it can be for the people who find themselves in need of the services we provide, and your words and actions go a long way toward helping them keep their dignity. I just want you to know that your work doesn’t go unnoticed but is always appreciated and having you as one of our volunteers serves to strengthen Kyra.

Thank you for all that you do. Yvonne

“I simply enjoy providing others with skills that can be of benefit to them day to day thereby enabling them to empower themselves.”

“Being a volunteer at Kyra with the benefits of seeing support they receive is the most rewarding work I have ever done.”

“Being a volunteer, having the ability to offer a resource which women otherwise may not have access to, is very worthwhile and fills me with a sense of pride and I am thankful for the opportunity.”

“being a volunteer at Kyra enables me to meet so many lovely women. Hopefully I can help them move forward and enrich their lives and mine.”

“Kyra has become a major part of my life—like an extended family. Not only have I met the most inspirational leader and volunteers but it has been a privilege to work with the many members who have trusted us to help them make positive changes in their lives.”

“It feels good to be part of change.”

New Volunteer

I became aware of the fantastic work that Kyra does in supporting women in York and decided to offer my time as a volunteer. I visited in June and it was explained what Kyra offers and the vital service and support that it provides for women.

Fast forward 3 months and I attended the first volunteer information day in September. We were given a really good overview of Kyra, its ethos and how it fits with other services in the city. There was some unexpected group work and discussion which I really enjoyed. The questions asked at my interview made me feel like Kyra was taking me seriously as a prospective volunteer. I found the information day to be informative and well-organised. It really gave me a sense of what I was about to become part of.

The support I have received has been brilliant. In the new member inductions, I am developing skills to help members talk about quite emotive subjects. This role is providing me with a great opportunity to practise these skills, as well as supporting the members and the work of this amazing charity. I find the work very rewarding and I am very proud to be part of Kyra.
**Kyra Activities**

All activities at Kyra are delivered in a safe, women-only space. Women say they feel supported and comfortable. Our new accommodation has a lot more space for private conversations and allows more than one activity to be held at a time. Some women who come to Kyra just attend one activity regularly, others attend several activities per week. All activities are facilitated by skilled and experienced volunteers/workers.

**Reflexology and Reiki**

Our move to larger premises this year - with greater space and more rooms - has allowed us to offer new services and/or expand their availability. This is the case with reflexology, which is available for both mini ‘taster’ sessions, and for full one-hour consultations. Our experienced volunteer, Sheila, comes to some Tuesday drop-ins where she offers mini sessions and shows members what reflexology is in practice, giving them an insight into what a full treatment might be like. The mini version is rather like a foot massage, and some members opt for a reflexology hand massage instead. Following their taster session, many opt to come for a full treatment. Another complementary therapy offered is Reiki. Beverley came to volunteer with Kyra as a result of an open day that we held following our move to the CMC in May 2015. She immediately felt that she wanted to volunteer by offering reiki one morning per week. Both reflexology and reiki have been very well received and popular. During the year, members fundraised for a professional treatment bed that is now in place and used for both treatments.

**Counselling**

One service that has grown considerably in the last year is our counselling service. There is a huge need amongst our members for counselling and we have taken on many more volunteers with counselling skills to meet this demand. We now have six volunteer counsellors who are in advanced training. We also offer specialist bereavement counselling, which is very sought after. We are receiving clients who have been referred from other agencies such as YACRO, GPs and York Carers. We provide our counselling free of charge, although many women make a donation for the service. We offer 756 counselling hours per year – at minimal rates, this amount of counselling would cost the community at least £22,680.
**ESTA – Self-Esteem Course**

Three groups have run this year attracting 21 women. Many of the members access the group following other interventions. The programme enables women to identify why they are struggling and what has impacted on their lives to feel so disempowered. Through sharing of skills group members are able to make decisions and choices they once felt unable to. Feedback has included:

“I feel as if a veil has been lifted from my eyes”, “I know I have a future - and now I feel I can go out and embrace it”

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**Assertiveness**

Many women find being assertive contrary to their learned set of values. At Kyra, we are able to address this through a bespoke assertiveness course that we have developed and have delivered to the benefit of 16 women.

The assertiveness course has two main objectives; to develop an understanding of assertive behaviour and, secondly, to share and practise practical skills and techniques, (in a safe and supportive environment). This supports women to make changes in their thinking and behaviour, to help increase confidence to express needs assertively. Often, this course is a natural progression for women who have taken the self-esteem course as they find they are ready to set goals and move on with their lives.

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**Thinking about Happiness Course**

Sometimes our moods swing and change without us being aware of how or why. Cath helped members make sense of this during a course she ran this year called ‘Thinking about Happiness’. This was a fun, mutually-supportive group course in which the women explored those things that brought them cheer, joy and comfort. Those on the course talked about smells, sounds and activities that evoked happy memories. They considered sensory happiness and learned which textures were happy to touch for them, or the pleasure to be had in sinking into a hot bath! They talked about the pleasure of walking on the beach in the wind, or kicking leaves on the forest floor. In addition, they indulged in the happiness to be found in eating cake!
Courses at Kyra

**Skills for Work**
The European Social Fund has funded two more cohorts of women through our ‘Skills for Work’ course. We worked with the women to help them identify their personal strengths and transferable skills. With a small group size and two tutors, we could give members individual support and guidance. We worked on CVs, job-hunting, volunteering, application forms, personal statements, and interview skills. The women reported feeling more work-ready at the end of the course, with improved self-confidence, and gave a better understanding of local voluntary work opportunities. Independent course evaluation showed that every woman made progress towards her individual aims whether it was to become more active, look for a job/voluntary work, start a business or make change in her personal life. Sadly this funding has now ended.

**Moving On Course**
Kyra and IDAS work together to facilitate a course to help victims of domestic abuse move on with their lives. Course feedback indicates that the majority of attendees have started to rebuild their lives, developing a network of friends whilst building confidence and within IDAS. Many course members continue to attend Kyra for other activities. Sarah Hill, Director of IDAS said

“I would recommend Kyra to any woman who needs to build a network of support, wants to take part in a course or develop their self-esteem”
Your Space/Drop-in
The Tuesday drop-in has gone from strength to strength with approximately 30 members attending some of the sessions. We have seen members making new friends and going on attend courses to build their confidence and self-esteem. Various activities have been successful from the regular crafting sessions to visiting activities, for example; Body Shop, Lush, fashion advice etc. The Tuesday drop-in allows members to enjoy a welcoming and comfortable environment. Regular reflexology and relaxation sessions have become popular "drop-in diversions". We have opened an additional drop-in session on Thursdays. It has been wonderful to see so many past members returning to Kyra too. We are always here to support and provide that much needed ‘space’ for all.

Singing
Kyra runs a weekly singing group for women who love music and singing but might find some performance choirs too formal for them.

Kayleigh’s experience of the Singing Group:
I first came to Kyra at the suggestion of my CPN; at a time when I was isolating myself, and suffering accordingly. Having talked myself out of going to the Singing Club over and over, I went along one evening. I had nothing to worry about, as it turns out. Straight away, everyone I met was so warm and friendly; they all made me feel welcome and let me just take everything in at my own pace, which was exactly what I needed. I honestly think joining Singing Club was the beginning of my recovery; the friendships I’ve made are invaluable to me, and singing itself has an amazing effect on my mood. It’s something I look forward to all week, and I’ve just enrolled on a course with a Community Choir so I can do even more of it.

Kayleigh Aug 2015

Staying On Track
Julie is another volunteer who joined this year as a result of what she learned about Kyra from our open day in May. Julie comes to Kyra one morning a week where she offers one-to-one support for any woman who might feel overwhelmed with any aspect of paperwork; this includes writing CVs, form-filling, job applications and time-management. Women with difficulties such as dyslexia can have low self-confidence levels, Julie is aware of this and can support accordingly. Julie’s ethos is one of working with the woman, rather than ‘doing it for them’, and her supportive and nurturing approach echoes what Kyra is all about.
Why I come to Kyra

I first came to Kyra in Marygate Lane. I found warmth and hospitality, somewhere to feel safe to meet women from all walks of life and chat about anything and everything. We’ve all got different life experiences and learn so much from each other without judgement.

At first my anxiety was so great I found it difficult to go to Jan’s relaxation group. But I re-joined a few months later and now I’m even able to meditate for short periods during her sessions. She has shown me techniques to enable me to manage my anxiety.

The Alice inter-generation project enabled me to meet women of different ages and listen to their memories. I’m still making scones using Yvonne’s recipe which we made at the mansion house.

I am grateful for the opportunity to have had reflexology and reiki through Kyra. The feeling of well-being after such treatments is amazing and gives my mind and body a welcome break!

The “Happiness” course was great fun too. I was sad to have missed the last 2 sessions but it made me challenge my thoughts and behaviour in a positive way whilst having fun.

I use the drop in sessions too, for a cup of tea and a natter and to join in the craft activities which take place. I’ve learnt lots of new crafts and am amazed at the hidden talents of people. I appreciate the new premises, the bright airy room is much bigger and doesn’t get quite as noisy as at Marygate. If it does become overwhelming I can retreat to a quieter room.

I immensely enjoyed the recent cooking session. Not only was it a great social but I learnt a lot and was inspired. I would love to attend more, especially to learn how to make stir-frys from scratch.

There have been days when I’ve been having a big wobble and have been supported and listened to by the volunteers. I would like to say a big thank you to all of you who are involved for your time and effort in making Kyra so successful.

L
R’s Experience of Kyra

“I first contacted Kyra as I had been having a hard time with postnatal depression. Having been treated I found myself isolated, lacking in confidence and unsure where to turn to or how to pick myself up. I joined a Kyra course, which not only gave me a chance to engage with women who felt the same ways I did, but taught me invaluable life skills in communication, critical thinking and assertiveness which I had struggled with while ill. I felt like a new person. My relationships with those around me improved and I stopped feeling as if I was living to please other people and no longer felt the world around me was passing me by.”

Singing with the ladies – KYRA Style by A

When I started with the singing group I was in a very low place. It took courage to attend the first time as I am not Charlotte Church or Katherine Jenkins but I as might as well have been for the warmth of the welcome I received from Eimear our musical guide and her very able second Cath. That was over six months ago and I haven’t looked back. The group is a pleasure to be part of; the joy of singing never fades, we laugh a lot and the cake is amazing too! If you want to sing please do come, you’ll be glad you did and so will we! A.. Sept 2015
Gardening

Following our move to St Saviourgate our gardening activities have moved to the courtyard at CMC. In 2015-16 we aim to transform this space by installing raised beds, climbing plants, and seating areas.

We are delighted to have received funding from Minster Law to enable the project to commence.

Social and Support Groups

Positive Birth and Bump to Birth

In response to an identified need, Kyra introduced two new services this year: ‘Positive Birth’ and ‘Bump to Birth’. Both offer a place for women to come together and share positive stories about their pregnancy, giving birth and raising their baby, as well as to prepare them for the emotional and practical aspects of birth and life with a baby. The aim of this ‘Positive Birth’ is to normalise positive birth and to help women to make informed decisions and to access the benefits to be had when they support each other. The NHS no longer provides free antenatal classes for women - in some areas it is outsourced to children’s centres, but not in York. In York, classes can be accessed privately, or York Teaching Hospital has online antenatal classes. Kyra is helping fill a gap, therefore, with ‘Bump to Birth’ which gives pregnant women the opportunity to meet others in the same position, bond over what they are thinking about, discuss their worries, and come up with solutions. We hope to expand this area of work in 2015/16.
Kyra listens to what members need, and we provide support in response to their feedback. Our members, where possible, like to be able to access as many services as they can from within our centre, and so we have developed partnerships to be able to do this. Some of the services that we offer include:

**My Money My life**: Support and advice on financial matters. In association with the Peasholme Trust.

**Cookery Courses**: Encouraging women to consider more cost-efficient and healthy ways to eat.

**Legal Advice** for our members – offered by Switalskis Solicitors

**Computer concerns** and social media advice helping keep women safe and secure when using different types of technology.

**Book group** sharing views and opinions on a set book.
York Carers

It has been a privilege for our outreach team to visit different organisations to share our work and increase understanding. We welcome requests to visit and meet different groups.

Working with some of York Carers members was a wonderful and humbling experience. Champagne breakfast, massage, make-over and photo-shoot – wow! Kyra loved hosting the event and hope we can do it again in the future.

Thank you to York Carers Centre for sponsoring the event.

50+ Festival

Kyra’s involvement in the 50+ festival was a huge success, with people both new to Kyra and existing members taking part. Workshops, taster sessions and an open drop-in provided a lively and welcome addition to the festival which had Wellbeing as its theme this year. Sue Lister, the event organiser, said how pleased she was to have Kyra join the festival.

Outreach team

Our outreach team have visited and spoken to a range of organisations about the work of Kyra. We intend to develop our outreach work further next year especially in the awareness training area.
What Our Partners Say

**PEASHOLME CHARITY**

We have been fortunate to have been involved with Kyra since it first started and we have really enjoyed seeing it grow and flourish. We are really pleased to have been part of that growth and we are proud to have a strong working relationship with your organisation.

Initially Wendy Haigh, our Trainer, delivered workshops at Kyra from our ‘My Money, My Life…’ financial inclusion project. More recently Alison Hodgson, our Financial Coach, has been providing a monthly drop-in for people wishing to improve their financial situation and money skills. Alison and Wendy also jointly provide ‘one-off’ workshops with a variety of financial content to meet the interests and needs of the women who attend Kyra.

We have more things in the pipeline to continue this work and look forward to building even stronger links in the future by providing workshops, events and one-to-one sessions that meet the needs of Kyra women.

We are pleased that we are contributing to Kyra and we are grateful for the support we receive in return.

Thank you Kyra from the Peasholme Charity.

**Mind _ York for better mental health**

It is fantastic to know that there is such a safe and supportive organisation in York which exists solely for women as I know that this can be an important factor in some women feeling comfortable. Kyra offers a huge variety of groups, activities and courses and I am always happy to recommend Kyra to clients I work with as I know that they will be welcomed and well-supported which is vital for all people but particularly those suffering with mental ill health.

Hannah Hessle
Senior Befriending Co-ordinator
The Family Focus Service is delighted to be working in partnership with Kyra.

Many of the women identified for the Family Focus programme have issues with loneliness, low self-esteem, have been a victim of domestic abuse and much more.

Kyra offers a safe, non-judgemental environment where our clients can drop in for a coffee, have an informal chat with other Kyra members, volunteers or request to see a qualified counsellor.

The majority of Family Focus clients struggle financially, so the fact that all the courses Kyra offer are free immediately takes any further financial pressure off the women.

There have been very positive outcomes for all the women that have taken up the recommendation of engaging with Kyra, whether it has been for a course or to have the opportunity to have somewhere safe to go where they can meet other women.

Kyra have supported the Family Focus programme to achieve the expected outcomes for 100% of families in Phase 1 of the programme. We look forward to working together in the expanded, more challenging Phase 2 programme over the coming years.

Hilary Mennell
Family Focus
Kyra - Joint working in York

Here at Changing Lives, Oaktrees we aim to support people in stopping their cycle of addiction; helping to rebuild their lives and enabling people to give back to the communities in which they live.

The twelve-week programme is held at Bowes Morrell House in York with continuing care available for support upon completion.

The programme involves working with individuals therapeutically to build a foundation for their abstinent recovery. We believe that understanding addiction and developing realistic options are crucial in early recovery. Our intense and structured programme offers the therapeutic environment to support this process for individuals.

During their time in treatment we begin working with people to develop a continuing care plan, this is based around the recovery capital model. As part of this process we encourage people to engage in any support they feel would be supportive of their health, wellbeing and recovery. In this process we have seen engagement from many of our clients with the Kyra services. We also encourage volunteering as a way of re-engaging with your community whilst developing self-esteem and it is wonderful that Kyra have this option for anyone interested in supporting their project.

The joint working with our sessional worker as a point of contact is also an important pathway of support. In this we see the benefit both for our clients to learn more about Kyra’s services and people accessing Kyra being able to learn more about recovery support in our community.

We would like to thank the team at Kyra for all of their support and look forward to our future working together. We have seen the importance of the support we co-create and that this is helping, and will continue to help, people in rebuilding their lives.

Kind regards
Andy Ryan
Operational Manager

“We have seen the importance of the support... and will continue to help [with Kyra], people in rebuilding their lives.”
York Housing Association

York Housing Association has been successfully working with Kyra to benefit the customers of The Women’s Housing Project for nearly two years. We support vulnerable single women who are often dealing with difficult problems, emotional issues and a lack of self-confidence.

Kyra has been a valuable resource for the Women’s Housing Project and we have been able to support a number of customers to access the varied activities and courses that they run. Our tenants have been very impressed by the staff and services on offer, and always give us good feedback when they have attended the centre.

Jennie Ironmonger
Housing Support Worker

The ‘Hokey Cokeyathon’ at Christmas. A big thank you to the students of York University for organising this event.
Kyra raises money in many different ways, but always with fun and enthusiasm. This year, we have continued our local fundraising and have been helped along the way by many generous people, and people giving of their time.

In March 2015, Dove, a special friend to Kyra, was so amazing and strong and determined to take on the challenge of a sponsored sky dive. Dove faces many challenges in her life, she was a master of the sky the day she jumped for Kyra. As a mark of our admiration and appreciation the counselling room in the new premises is now named the ‘Dove Room’.

In July of this year, another good friend of Kyra, Shelagh Garside who runs a York-based women’s social networking organisation called ‘Ladies Who…’ was incredibly generous in organising a summer ball to raise funds for us. This was a memorable night with good food, fabulous live singers, a packed dance floor and an auction of unique prizes. We are so grateful to Shelagh and her Ladies Who for supporting us and working so hard to make this a special night.

Our members are also unstinting in their ideas, enthusiasm and actions to raise money. We have had bake sales and our members make jewellery which is sold within and outside of our centre. In the last year we have knitted our way to raise money via a ‘Hats Off to Kyra’ woolly hat sale in Newton-on-Ouse. We had a mid-summer fete at Bishopthorpe, a car boot sale at the Knavesmire - where volunteers were up before the birds – and a tombola stall in Parliament Street on perhaps the wettest day of the year. Regardless of weather or setbacks, or early starts, our fundraisers keep smiling and keep drumming up support, thank you all!
We would like to thank all those who have supported Kyra financially and in kind. The generosity of our donors has been essential in helping us provide services to women. We have received great support from private donors, individual and community fund raisers, local and national business sponsors, charitable trusts and grant making bodies. Without this support Kyra could not have achieved what it has.

Thank you to all those who have helped us provide women with support and empowerment to improve their lives.

Thank You

The Guyll-Leng Charitable Trust

Friends Adult School Trust

North Yorkshire Police recovered property fund

The Scurrah Wainwright Charity

Thank You
We had 176 unique registered members of Kyra since last November. 30% were aged between 25 and 34.

Currently we have 248 members accessing Kyra’s services and activities.
Our 23 Volunteers have put in 9,600 hours over the year; that’s 192 hours per week. So each volunteer averages 8.5 hours a week!

Kyra has had 1068 visits in the first 26 weeks of the year which is on average 41 women per week.

On average since moving to the new premises in the CMC, 94 Women attend Kyra every week.

Disabilities

- Do not have a declared disability: 45%
- Have declared a form of mental health condition: 35%
- Have learning difficulties: 10%
- Declared a mobility disability: 5%
- Preferred not to say: 5%
The Value Of What We Do

Kyra has referrals from many sources. The main sources are word of mouth and through friends (44%); IDAS, MIND and support workers have also made a significant contribution.

36% of Kyra users are employed.

The York Ethnicity figures from 2010 for comparison

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>92.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>1.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>3.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>1.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese or other</td>
<td>1.40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Value Of What We Do

It is interesting to compare the 2011 Census on religious belief in York to those using Kyra. Kyra has a similar spread.

Religion in York 2011 Census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>59.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No religion</td>
<td>30.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>0.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>0.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>0.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikh</td>
<td>0.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other religions</td>
<td>0.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion not stated</td>
<td>7.80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Contact Information

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