



# kyra

## women's project

### Annual Review 2020-2021

*"Kyra feels like it has been a lifeline for me."*



# FOREWORD FROM OUR PATRON

When I wrote the introduction to Kyra's Annual Review last year, I hardly thought that we would all still be in the grip of the coronavirus pandemic a year on.

When the pandemic first emerged, I was so impressed by the response of the Kyra volunteers to the sudden imposition of lockdown. In no time at all they had moved all their services online and they continued to provide essential support to women throughout the year in spite of all of the restrictions.

This year, the news is better. After holding a wonderful week of online events to mark International Women's Day in March, Kyra was finally able to re-open its doors to members in April. I was delighted to hear how well this went, with lots of women coming back to Kyra with great relief and appreciation for 'a little bit of normality'. Knowing Kyra, I was not surprised that the re-opening was done so carefully, with lots of Covid precautions in place.

I have really missed being able to visit Kyra during the last difficult years. But I am looking forward to coming back to meet members again in the future; and to saying thank you in person to the fantastic cohort of Kyra volunteers. I want to assure them all of my admiration and support for the wonderful work they do for women in and around York.

*Dame Penelope Winton DBE*



## INTRODUCTION FROM OUR CHAIR

As I reflect on the last year, I have an overwhelming sense of pride. I am proud of the way everyone involved with Kyra has continued despite the ongoing adversity and challenges of the pandemic. My pride extends across all our staff working tirelessly, our amazing volunteers and all our members who have shown such strength.

It was a privilege to open International Women's Week and experience the innovation of bringing this online. Once again showing the determination of Kyra to respond and find a way through to support our members.

The review of the year always gives me a chance to be reminded of all the different offers to our members and community that is available at Kyra. We have enjoyed welcoming people back in person to Kyra and continuing to build on all the work in the last year.

Thanks to all

*Nat McMillan*



# A YEAR OF RECOVERY

It almost goes without saying that the year 2020/21 was unlike any other. In September 2020, Kyra premises were open but there were no members coming in to receive support and companionship, and no volunteers providing their skilled services to members. Then there was a second lockdown in November, and a third from January to March 2021, when we closed the premises and worked from home.

During this time, our volunteers and session leaders were working online, providing all of our courses and activities in the virtual space so that members could continue to find support, build confidence, learn new skills and express themselves, in spite of the extraordinary circumstances surrounding us all.

“THANK YOU FOR BEING THERE WHEN I NEEDED YOU.  
LOCKDOWN HAS BEEN HARD FOR ALL OF US ... I  
THOUGHT MY PAST DIFFICULTIES WERE A THING OF  
THE PAST, BUT I WAS TESTED WITH THIS ISOLATION.  
I WOULD NOT HAVE COME OUT OF THIS IN THE SAME  
POSITION WITHOUT YOUR HELP AND SUPPORT. THANK  
YOU FOR BEING KYRA.”

*Many members said that these opportunities were a lifeline for them when they were isolated during the lockdown periods.*

This March join Kyra Women's Project for  
**INTERNATIONAL WOMENS WEEK**  
Celebrate women, with us

PANELS | GUEST SPEAKERS  
DRAMA | POETRY | ARTS & CRAFTS  
SINGING | EXERCISE | AND MORE

MONDAY 8 - FRIDAY 12 MARCH 2021  
DONATIONS REQUESTED  
<https://kyraiwd2021.eventbrite.co.uk> | [www.kyra.org.uk](http://www.kyra.org.uk)

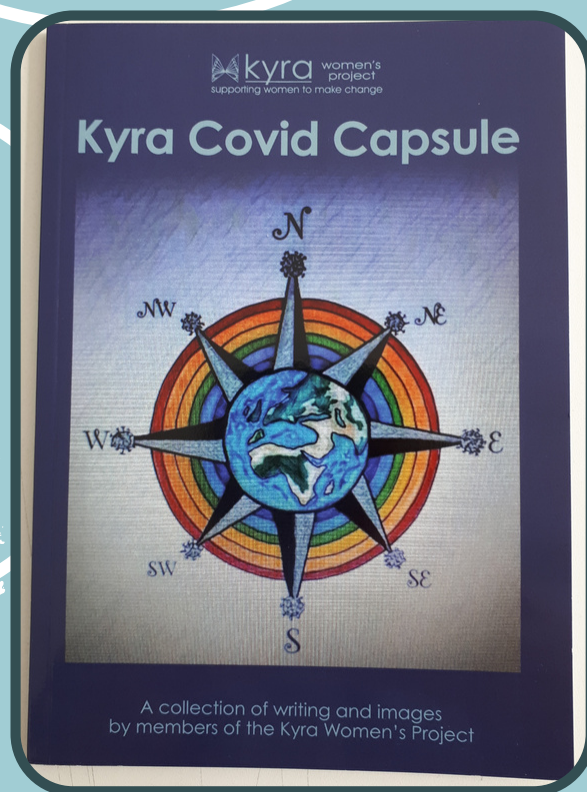
kyra women's project

The spring lockdown covered International Women's Week, in March 2021. So rather than cancel our usual celebration, we moved the whole event online, providing five days of talks, workshops and demonstrations as part of the City of York's IWD programme. Fifteen different organisations contributed and there were more than 400 attendances across the week.

Being online even had the advantage of enabling women from outside York – and from as far away as Surrey – to join us for the learning and celebration.

During the first lockdown, in spring 2020, our members were asked to write poems and create images to reflect their experiences during this isolating time. Their work was brought together for publication in the autumn and launched during International Women's Week as the Kyra Covid Capsule.

York Rotary kindly sponsored the printing of this booklet, the second such collection of Kyra members' work after 'Reflections'.



*"The [collection] is poignant and reflective, funny and positive, and something that will record for generations to come the resilience and tenacity of women in York and area."*

From the Foreword by Yvonne Copley,  
founder of Kyra Women's Project.

Following the lifting of the national 'stay at home' order in April 2021, Kyra was finally able to open its doors to members again. With careful Covid protocols in place, we welcomed back members to in-person courses and sessions, face-to-face counselling and informal get togethers.

By September, there were 21 sessions a week available to members, and around 200 attendances every week. It has been wonderful to see the enjoyment and relief of members, and hear the buzz around the building, as women use our support to make positive changes in their lives.

Rosemary Cook, CEO

*"It's like medicine for the soul. thank you!"*

# Our Members' Year

Re-opening our premises in April brought the welcome sight of members returning to Kyra. While many had greatly valued support online and by telephone, most much preferred being with others face-to-face. Here are some of their comments on Kyra's activities in 2020/21:

*"The Kyra Rose Project has helped me in ways I couldn't have imagined. The weekly sessions acted as a 'check-in' for me, allowing me to set myself realistic goals which I proudly achieved each week. The sessions helped to build my confidence and self-esteem, as well as allowing me to identify the patterns and predicaments I get myself in when dealing with argumentative situations, low self-esteem, and other areas. I learnt how to effectively break these cycles in order to avoid repetitive negative situations and thoughts." Member, ROSE young women's project*



*"After the writing group it came into my head. I realised the thought, that I am the architect of my life. I have the ability to change my life, it can be a beautiful garden. That's what I say about my life now. I can make it like a beautiful garden." Member, Therapeutic Writing course*

*"I have only been a member of Kyra for six months but I attended the Women's week events, I'm part of the art and craft group, I've been seeing [a counsellor] and I've been to the drop ins since they were restarted. I can't express just how much it has enriched and supported me. I am struggling to be part of it all, but at the same time it makes me feel safe, I have a place to belong and it doesn't matter if I'm not okay, because everyone understands and everyone is so nice!" Member, joined during lockdown*

*"I have PTSD and [these sessions] should be on the NHS. I have not felt so relaxed since before I was attacked. It's amazing! I can't believe how much it helped." Relaxation session participant*

*"I really don't know where I would be mentally, and even physically if it weren't for the input from ATI, yourself and all of the involvement from Kyra. Since being referred I have undergone lots of classes, lots of learning ... I feel I have a life I can and am forging." ATI project participant*

# Our Volunteers

Kyra's range of courses and activities could not take place without the energy and support of our volunteers and course leaders. This year they ensured that members could benefit from a wide range of activities:

## Reducing Isolation

Drop-ins  
Phone Calls  
Craft Group  
Spanish  
Cookery  
Walking Group

## Addressing Specific Issues

Recovery from domestic abuse  
Self Esteem  
Counselling  
Legal advice  
Bereavement and loss  
Money advice

## Expressing/Exploring Feelings

Drama  
Art  
Singing  
Therapeutic Writing  
Mindfulness  
Singing  
Meditation  
Poetry

## Building Confidence

Coaching  
Preparation for employment  
Assertiveness  
Mentoring  
IT Skills  
Yoga  
Self-defense  
Young women's group  
Time of our life club

*"It wasn't until May 2021 that I reflected on just how intense the work had been, working on zoom & the telephone with clients and all the extra training I had done in that 12 month period. It felt great to be back in Kyra, like I'd never been away."*

Julia, volunteer counsellor

*"Seeing everyone sharing and enjoying the food gives me so much pleasure. It is also popular with the staff in the office!"*

Sally, Cookery Tutor

# Our Projects

## Kyra Bounces Back



Our Kyra Bounces Back project, funded by The National Lottery Community Fund, ran from November 2020 to March 2021. It helped us adapt our services so they didn't stop at a critical time during the pandemic. It also helped to offset a shortfall in income when we were unable to fundraise. We mobilised our existing 43 registered volunteers, recruited and trained 38 more, and maintained regular contact with 140 members each week. We moved 19 courses and activities online and with our counselling team supporting 50 members each week too, we offered 22 weekly support systems.

Anna Perrett, Coronavirus Support Coordinator

## Route to Recovery



Our four-year R2R project, which began in March 2021 and is funded by The National Lottery, will work with 60 women each year who have experienced domestic abuse or mental ill health. The project will help them find a pathway through Kyra's support with one-to-one help to set goals and work toward them. By September 2021, we found that 87% of those part-way through the R2R programme felt more in control of their life, and 100% of R2R members felt that they were part of a supportive community.

Anna Perrett, Project Manager

## LEAP (Learn, Explore, Take Action, Progress)

Employment or further education. Each member has one-to-one support and group sessions as well as access to all the activities available at Kyra. During the one-to-one sessions, the member has the opportunity to design a unique pathway that will help progress them to their goals. By September 2021, we have progressed two members into employment.

Becky Lennon, Project Mentor



## Helping Hand

This project has created pathways for women in touch with the justice system, or at risk of offending, to be integrated into Kyra's activities. The aim is to help them make positive choices and re-build their confidence.

Georgie Fishkin, Coordinator for Integration



## Rose Group

The young women's group came back to the building in April 2021. There was quite a lot of anxiety around 'being out' again as well as socializing with others, so we continued online as well to ensure that it was accessible to all. The sessions focused not just on emotional wellbeing but also addressing face to face relationships being formed again and social bonding. In May, we held a party to celebrate 2 years of the Rose Project.

Sherrie Wood, ROSE project leader

## SWIRL (Supporting Women in Rural Locations)

The Supporting Women in Rural Locations (SWIRL) Project successfully recruited and trained 6 Kyra Community Ambassadors who provide signposting to Kyra, for women living in the rural areas surrounding York. This project successfully extended Kyra's reach, leaving a network of Ambassadors who continue to signpost women into Kyra for support with positive change and reducing the impact of rural isolation.

Claire Cutler Casey, Project Lead



## ATI (Action Towards Inclusion)

The last year has come with its challenges imposed by Covid. Our usual support of tailored activities to meet an individual's needs and overcome barriers to employment was offered via Zoom and sometimes face-to-face. Support included English, Maths and ICT skills, help with CV writing and interview skills, debt advice and art workshops through outside agencies. Along with these we also offer in-house courses to help with wellbeing and alleviate anxiety; and counselling, which has been hugely needed during this difficult year.

Glynis Werndly, Key Worker





# Delivery Partners and Collaborations

We have been delighted to work with many other organisations in and around York this year to deliver our work. These include:

## **Crombie Wilkinson Solicitors**

This year marked five years of support from Crombie Wilkinson solicitors who provide free initial consultations for our members on matters of family law.



“ We continue to be passionate about and enjoy supporting the great work that Kyra does in our community. To be able to help anyone who comes to Kyra looking for the right legal advice for their circumstances means a lot to us and we will continue to do our best for those who need us.” Juliette Kilkenny, Crombie Wilkinson

## **IDAS (Independent Domestic Abuse Services)**

This charity works with us to provide the Moving On from Domestic Abuse course for our members.

“ We believe that by working together we are more able, not only to support victims and survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence, but to increase awareness and have more of a voice in tackling the issues that underpin violence against women and girls.”

Evie Duarte, IDAS



**Peasholme Charity**

'My Money. My Life.' is a Peasholme Charity project delivered in partner venues including Kyra.

“ We are so happy that we could continue to work alongside Kyra by offering extended access to 'My Money. My Life...' over the last 12 months. The Covid-19 pandemic continues to impact on the most vulnerable people in our city, and we are thankful that Kyra provides us an opportunity to support vulnerable women in a gender specific setting.” Yvonne Morrissey,

Peasholme Charity

**Positive Belief Ltd**

Confidence coach Jules Wyman has delivered free coaching sessions to Kyra members on 'Motivational Mondays' for many years.

*Jules* WYMAN 

*Confidence*  
is an inside job



“ Having the opportunity to coach Kyra members is rewarding, humbling and a treasured time for me each month.” Jules Wyman, Positive Belief Ltd.

**York Mind**

Runs the Spartacus mental health and well-being activities programme through which we were able to provide grief counselling and a menopause group; and start a new course for women over 50 called Time of Our Lives.

“ It is a pleasure and privilege to work with such a specialist organisation in the neevieeds and support of women. An asset to the City of York. Kyra's new project-Time of Our Lives club, offers much needed support, socialisation and health/wellbeing education to women over the age of 50 years.” Jamie Edwards, York Mind

# NEW PARTNERS

"Torque Law are dedicated to giving back and this year we have focused on vulnerability in the workplace, so partnering with Kyra, who work locally to help women make positive changes in their life was the perfect fit for us."

Tiggy Clifford, Partner

In 2020, we were delighted to begin a new partnership with Torque Law LLP, a leading employment law firm based in York led by two female partners.

The company has generously supported Kyra with both donations – helping to fund training for Freedom Course facilitators and our Loss



Group – and by giving us their time, by speaking at our International Women's Day event in March. They also sponsored our Dragon Boat race team.



We were also very excited this year when York St John's University cheerleaders club offered to make Kyra one of their supported charities in 2021.

The group sprang into action by supporting us at the Dragon Boat race and the Yorkshire marathon. Next they have plans to hold bake sales, pub quizzes and Zumba sessions, as well as collecting when they are actually cheerleading!



"YSJ Kats wanted to support Kyra Women's Project as we felt we wanted to support a local York charity that we could get involved with at in-person events and visit their site to support them as when and they needed. With them being a women's support charity we felt a personal connection as an all-girls sports team."

Leah Thompson, Charity Secretary

# FUNDERS

Thank you to all of our funders this year, whose support makes our work possible

- Awards for All – National Lottery
- Benenden Health
- Better Connect
- Betty's and Taylor's Group
- Charity of Jane Wright
- Charles Hayward Foundation
- Charlie and Elsie Sykes Trust
- Comic Relief
- Education and Skills Funding Agency
- European Social Fund
- Fairness Foundation
- Feoffees of St Michael's Spurriergate
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- Guildhall Ward
- Hillards Charitable Trust

- Humber Learning Consortium
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation
- Leeds Building Society Foundation
- Minster Lions
- Norman Collinson
- North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
- North Yorkshire Sport
- Paul Bishop Writing
- Persimmon Community Charity
- Purey Cust Trust
- Rotary York
- Solwise Gardening 2017
- The Brelms Trust
- The Conservation Volunteers
- The National Lottery
- Torque Law
- Two Ridings Community Foundation
- Woodward Trust Fund
- York City Council

**Thanks to Friends of Kyra and all other individual donors too numerous to mention.**

# People Supporting Kyra



Kyra Trustee Helen Bradley went the extra mile for the charity last year when she competed in the York 10k and raised over £500 in sponsorship for Kyra. Helen finished the race in a very respectable 1hr 2mins and 18 seconds.

Models Rachel Peru and Annie Stirk organized a unique fashion show at Goldsborough Hall and raised over £2000 for Kyra. Headlined 'Silver and Sassy', the show celebrated older women with silver, white or grey hair as they modelled a variety of clothing. One of the models was Kyra member Heather.



# #DoltForKyra

Huge thanks went to the fantastic students at Queen Margaret's School in York, who raised an amazing £1873 for Kyra. They took on various fundraising challenges including creating Christmas cards and selling Easter eggs.



York Rotary Club's 19th Dragon Boat Race took place on the Ouse in York, and Kyra's intrepid team of rowers did an amazing job! They finished second in all their heats and were 21st out of 33 teams overall. They raised more than £3000 in sponsorship.

# #DoltForKyra

Kyra member Carrie raised the money this year by knitting pouches for phones or tissues and selling them to raise funds, bringing in over £500. Carrie said: "It was a pleasure to be able to spend my time giving back - in a tiny way compared to what Kyra has given me."



Minnie, another Kyra member, put her sewing skills to good use making masks in Kyra colours. As well as being very useful as we returned from lockdown, the masks raised over £600 for Kyra.

# #DoltForKyra

Our fantastic supporters the York St John Cheerleaders have been raising funds for Kyra all year. The three bears and their colleagues have already raised more than £200 from a bake sale, a pub quiz and an 80s-themed Zumba night.



A huge thank you to all the Friends of Kyra – our regular donors, whose support is essential to maintaining our services. To become a Friend of Kyra, email [contact@kyra.org.uk](mailto:contact@kyra.org.uk)



# RECOGNITION FOR *Kyra*

In March 21, we were delighted to receive a certificate of recognition from Rotary York Ainsty.

The Community Citation was presented during lockdown, and the wording reads:

*"Kyra Women's Project Team – in appreciation of the outstanding work in mitigating the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic through exemplary community-supporting activities thus demonstrating that fellowship, leadership and service can make York and district a better and safer place to live and work."*



We were also very excited to be nominated for a York Community Pride award in September 2021.

Nominated in the 'community project of the year' category, although we didn't win, we were very proud and humbled to be one of three finalists in our category.



In August, some members of our Art and Craft group were thrilled to have their work displayed in an outdoor exhibition on Dame Judi Dench Walk. Three pieces were shown as part of the What I Love About York exhibition. In the same month, our members' book of poems and images, the Kyra Covid Capsule, was added to the background material for the York Museum's Trust's Curating Covid project, making it available to researchers looking back on this unique period.



Kyra's founder Yvonne Copley MBE was chosen as one of the 2021 Welcome to Yorkshire Ebor Festival's Community Heroes. Nominated by Kyra for her amazing work in keeping Kyra going during the first pandemic lockdown, Yvonne made sure that women were supported by the charity online and by phone during that very stressful and scary time.



# Our Board of TRUSTEES

As of 30 September 2021, our Trustees, who are also Directors of the Company, were:

- **Natalie McMillan** – Chair - Natalie had worked across health and social care for 15 years prior to setting up her own business providing HR services alongside events that empower and support women into leadership roles.
- **Lisa Winward** – Vice Chair - Lisa is Chief Constable of North Yorkshire Police and is passionate about keeping our communities safe and making them feel safe.
- **Liz Kaplan** – Treasurer - Liz is a CIMA-qualified Finance Director who has held senior and board-level finance and operational roles, primarily in start-up and fast growth companies, for 15 years.
- **Rebecca Biggins** - Rebecca is Director of Marketing and External Engagement and a Senior Lecturer in Marketing and Tourism at York Business School, York St John University, and is passionate about education, learning, development.

## Retiring Trustees

The Board was sorry to say goodbye to Claire McNamara, Secretary to the Board, Susan Brook, Treasurer, and Susan Brench, when their terms of office came to an end.

Kyra would like to thank them for all their hard work and dedication to Kyra and wish them well in the future.

## New Trustees 2020/21

- **Annabel Jelley** – Annabel has a background in public funding and specialises in the skills people need to succeed in work and life. She is a consultant working on strategy development, impact assessment, evaluation and research projects.
- **Helen Bradley** – Helen is Head of Business Development at Family Fund Business Services (FFBS). Her primary focus is building new partnerships with organisations and helping them extend the reach of their funds to support even people in need.
- **Victoria Remington-Smith** – Victoria is an Executive Assistant in the NHS, where she enjoys helping others, supporting them and helping them develop themselves to be the best they can be.
- **Nicola Winter** – Nicola works for a finance company in Operational Risk and outside of work she volunteers as the IT support for the City of York Hockey Club, Ladies Coach and part of the fundraising team.

# Plans for 2021/22

The Board of Trustees was pleased to be able to tick off the actions planned for 2020/21 by the end of the year:

- ✓ Completing the recruitment of new trustees.
- ✓ Recruiting a permanent Chief Executive Officer.
- ✓ Implementing a new five year strategy for Kyra.
- ✓ Overseeing the re-start of services on the premises once coronavirus restrictions eased.

In the coming year, the Board plans to:

Create a new fundraising strategy so that activities can be maintained

Overhaul our volunteering strategy to increase diversity and flexibility in our workforce.

Consult with members and stakeholders about the future of Kyra

Launch a new Kyra Ambassador programme to place ambassadors in workplaces and institutions across York

# Accounts

## Statement of Financial Activities (incorporating Income and Expenditure accounts) for the year ended 30th September 2021

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2021	Total 2020
	£	£	£	£
<b>Income</b>				
Donations and Legacies	11,866	257,100	268,966	180,625
Activities for generating funds	5,248	-	5,248	8,580
Investment income	-	-	-	-
Income from charitable activities	2,706	-	2,706	1,104
Other incoming resources	-	-	-	-
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<b>19,819</b>	<b>257,100</b>	<b>276,919</b>	<b>190,309</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Cost of raising funds	-	-	-	-
Cost of generating voluntary income	-	-	-	-
Fundraising trading costs	1,636	-	1,636	602
Investment management costs	-	-	-	-
Charitable activities	39,864	192,916	232,780	163,787
Governance costs	390	-	390	372
Other resources expended	-	-	-	-
<b>Total resources expended</b>	<b>41,890</b>	<b>192,916</b>	<b>234,806</b>	<b>164,761</b>
<b>Net Income/(expenditure) before other recognised gains/(losses)</b>	<b>(22,071)</b>	<b>64,184</b>	<b>42,113</b>	<b>25,548</b>
Other recognised gains/ (losses)	-	-	-	-
Gains and losses on revaluation of fixed assets for the charity's own use	-	-	-	-
Gains and losses on investment assets	-	-	-	-
Gross transfers between funds	38,249	(38,249)	-	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	<b>16,178</b>	<b>25,935</b>	<b>42,113</b>	<b>25,548</b>
Total funds brought forward	54,954	57,281	112,235	86,684
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<b>71,132</b>	<b>83,216</b>	<b>154,348</b>	<b>112,232</b>





[www.kyra.org.uk](http://www.kyra.org.uk)

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