



Kairos Women's Space

Consultation with Women in Renfrewshire

2020



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Background of Kairos

“Kairos Women’s Space (Kairos) is a second-home for women and non-binary people in Renfrewshire and beyond and we believe that when women support women, incredible things happen! Kairos is a community-led, asset-based women’s space for all women, which actively encourages engagement from those experiencing tough times and leads to transformational change in their lives.”

Kairos Women’s Space (Kairos) is a project within Active Communities (AC) which launched in early 2018. We have our own women-only space in Johnstone at 8 Quarry Street and offer a range of one-to-one support, courses, activities, access to specialist support and volunteering opportunities. We have a particular focus on equality and our work can be split into four themes: *support, arts & heritage, food and learning.*

Projects at Kairos			
Support	Food	Learning	Arts & Heritage
Beautiful Women, Beautiful Me – 12-session Personal Development course	Kairos Kitchen – World Foods Project	Equalities Collective – campaigning group	Kairos Museum – Women’s History Project
One-to-one support – emotional/practical support	Active Communities Food Packs Project – delivering food to families in need via Fareshare	Open Events – focussed on issues affecting women, equality & culture	Making Her Mark – arts & heritage project with Glasgow Women’s Library
Recovery Space – addictions peer support group		Brew & a Blether – Podcast exploring local women’s lives	Kairos Chronicle – community magazine showcasing women
		Training Programme – 10-session programme for volunteers & women	Travelling Book Club – celebrating women writers with pre-loved books in the post

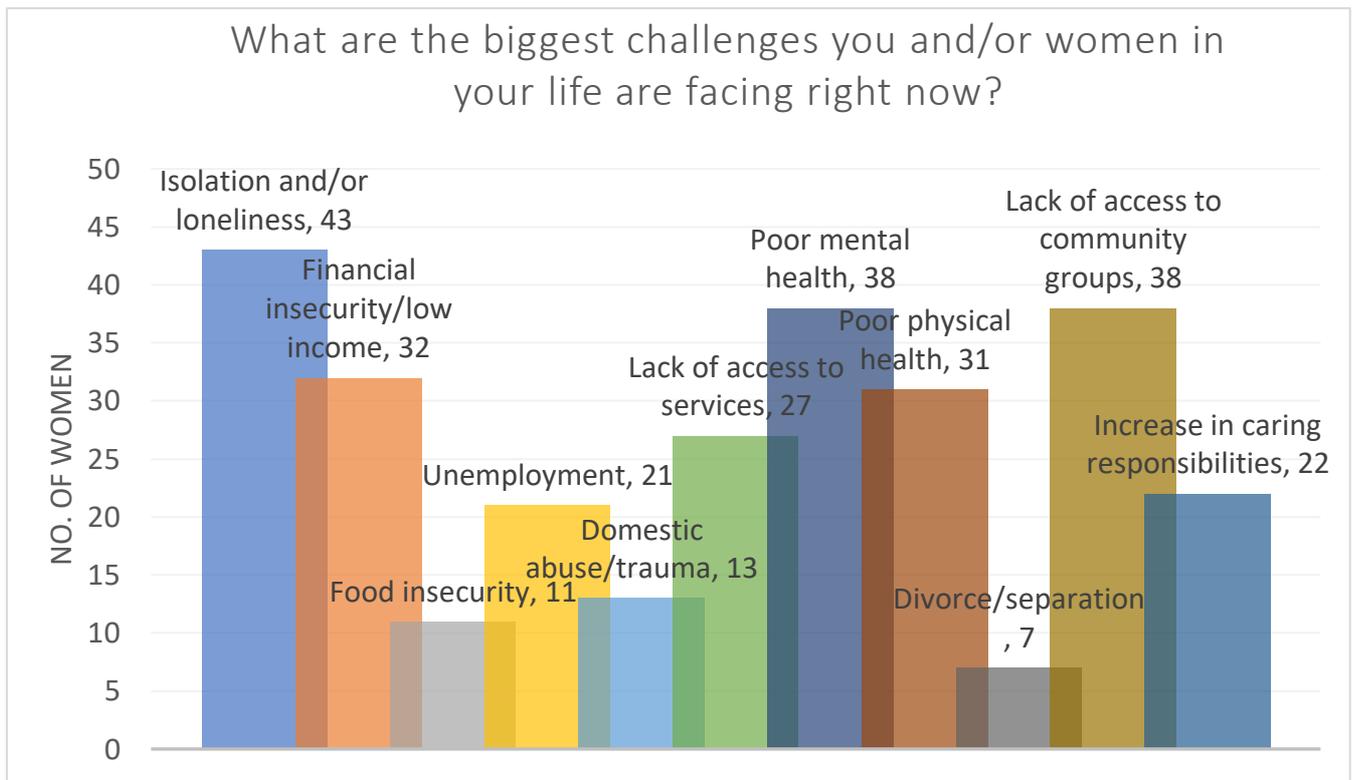
What women told us

We heard from **77 different women** and non-binary people across Renfrewshire between October-November 2020 via an online survey. For women who are not online, we spoke to them over the phone and completed the survey alongside them. Those who responded were participating women (34%), volunteers (16%) and non-participating women (50%). See the full demographics details in Appendix 1.

Women told us that they want Kairos to *‘bring women together in whatever way possible’* and *‘provide a base to join likeminded women to challenge ourselves and support each other.’* There was a strong feeling that Kairos’ role should be to *‘provide a **safe space**’* that *‘helps women connect’* with each other by *‘bringing together different ages and cultures.’*

Women valued the space and opportunity to be **listened to** and understood and they felt that Kairos should *‘offer a listening ear and help with mental health’* and *‘provide 1-2-1 support’*. There was a feeling that women want us to *‘carry on being there’* and *‘keep in touch by lending an ear for support, advice and a helping hand.’* **Mental health support** was a core theme raised by many women to *‘reduce isolation, focus on mental wellbeing and give women a range of opportunities to be well’* with ideas such

as 'offering personal development opportunities' and 'phone / zoom / facetime and door to door contact.'



Online Activity

There was a commitment to our **online activity** and the need for Kairos to 'continue offering Zoom classes/discussions' as well as making a website as a central space for all our projects. We will continue to offer regular spaces for women to connect online through our Kairos Museum group (women's history), virtual events as well as support spaces. The most popular online activities were:

- Peer Support Group for Mental Health
- Discussion spaces – Women's Health, Women's Employment
- Live Craft sessions
- Beautiful Women, Personal Development Programme
- Parties to mark Halloween, Christmas, etc

Other online workshop ideas included: Food Growing, Mindfulness, Teaching English as a Foreign Language, Women & the arts, Art Group and Carers Group. If you have knowledge or experience to share in any of these areas please get in touch with us.

We asked women what might stop them getting involved in online activity and a large number answered 'nothing' (22). The other themes were:

1. **Privacy** – partner or family members being home
2. **Digital access** – no access to the internet, poor internet connection, no phone credit or computer
3. **Discomfort** – self-conscious about Zoom and being on screen, preferring in person interaction than online
4. **Time and timing** – busy with children and other commitments or workshops being in work hours so not able to attend

5. **Other** – not wanting to feel like a patient, forgetting, not being interested in a topic or the fear of getting a poor experience

Other ideas

There were great ideas for **outdoor activity** such as walking groups, socially distanced pamper sessions, forest routes, cycling groups, outdoor drop-in and outdoor art classes. A number of women were keen that Kairos came to other towns across Renfrewshire rather than women having to travel to Johnstone. Both of these ideas will be explored when there are changes in restrictions.

Many women told us that Kairos should be a space to **access support from other services**, which is something we are committed to and encouraged by. Women imagined *'one reliable place that can tell us who to ask for whatever help we need' and 'a safe place to meet, get advice and support on services available.'* We are committed to finding ways to manage this need within the current covid restrictions and hope that a **website** will offer a platform to connect women to other key services in the area. Additionally, our staff and volunteer teams are committed to increasing their knowledge of other services, particularly changes in service provision during lockdown, and we are currently **developing in-house training** to meet this need.

A small number of women were interested in **family and youth activities** including providing weekend access for parents and kids together. Prior to lockdown, we hosted weekly family-friendly drop-in sessions on Thursday mornings as well as family workshops in the school holidays. We also worked closely with the wider Active Communities youth project and were in the process of developing a **Kairos Youth** project for young women aged 16-25, which was paused due to covid.

A number of women thought Kairos should respond to the **impact of trauma** by supporting families affected by domestic abuse and creating a support group for women who have experienced domestic abuse. **Beautiful Women**, our 12-session personal development programme, will be available virtually from January 2021 and provides a safe space for women to share experiences of abuse and trauma as well as access additional one-to-one support from trained staff. We also link up with Renfrewshire Women's Aid and Women and Children First to ensure women and families have access to specialist support.

We asked women what would put them off coming to Kairos in person. A number answered 'nothing' (16). The other main themes were:

1. **New space** - anxiety or uncertainty about coming for the first time, feeling judged or like it was cliquey
2. **Transport** – including costs and risks of covid on public transport
3. **Health** – mental or physical health preventing attendance
4. **Covid** – restrictions or risks of catching it
5. **Distance** – being in Johnstone
6. **Other** – not having private meeting spaces, inconvenient hours and lack of childcare

There was a positive feeling about Kairos' current work in the community during covid, *'I think Kairos is doing their best just now', 'I think Kairos are doing a lot already as far as supporting the community'* and that Kairos should *'continue to do what they do best*

– welcome, listen, support, encourage, believe in, give responsibility to, love and laugh with.'

Feedback from Food Packs Recipients

Since July 2020 we have been delivering food to families across Renfrewshire as part of our **Active Communities Food Packs Project**. In that time, we have delivered to over 50 different families in need across the area. We sent out surveys and received 23 back: 100% told us the service they received was excellent and we found new ways of offering support such as Recipe Packs, Festive Packs and support calls. The last delivery supported 38 families (107 individuals, 30 of those children under 11) with 214 meals.

Our volunteer drivers Kate, Cath and Sheila have been the key to this project, delivering to 10 families each week with a smile. They offer social connection as well as food to many of our families and provide links to other things going on at Kairos, Active Communities and beyond.



"I actually look forward to a Thursday as I can have a good natter with her. She is the only contact from the outside I have."

"Wonderful lady! Friendly, polite and a wee breath of fresh air in my day - always takes the time for a chat. 1st class delivery, such a great service and greatly appreciated."

"This service has been such a lifeline, made such a difference to my budget and health. Thank you. All the other wee bits and pieces cheer me up, sounds silly but when you have no biscuits and they arrive in a parcel, it's a treat!"

"It's really nice to have a wee chat as well. It's wonderful to receive it, not only helps me a lot but always a surprise. A huge big THANK YOU. You have helped me such a lot when times have been really tough."

"For the first time in my Scottish life (8 years) that I feel supported. You're my extended family. Thank you so much for all you have been doing."

What we'll do next

In response to the consultation feedback from women across Renfrewshire, we are launching the following:

- **Virtual mental health support group** – developed by volunteers who will create a peer support group on Zoom.

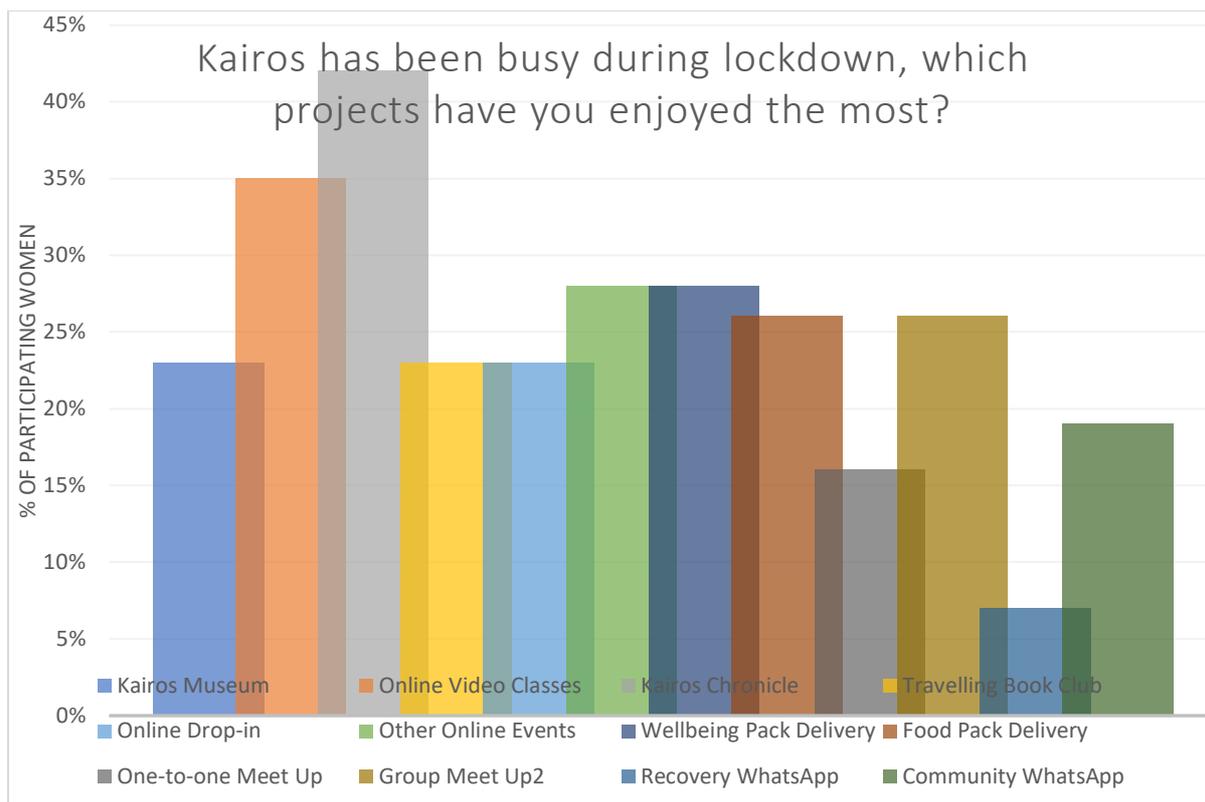
- **Virtual Events** – Women’s Health (exploring mental wellbeing during covid) and Women and Employment. We are working with volunteers, particularly those with experience of mental ill health to develop these ideas.
- **Live Craft workshops** – volunteer-led workshops to learn new skills in the comfort of your own home.
- **Virtual Beautiful Women** (Personal Development Programme) – adapting our course for the virtual world. A 6-session programme exploring womanhood, identity, judgement, resilience and belonging.
- **Friends of Kairos** – connecting volunteers with women in the community to provide a network of peer support via support calls, doorstep chats and food deliveries.
- **Volunteer Training** – package of training adapted for online delivery.

We will continue:

- **One-to-one support** – phone, Zoom and in person support (in line with restrictions)
- **Food Packs** – delivered to the homes of families in need across Renfrewshire
- **Recipe Packs** – posted goodies for the whole family
- **Kairos Museum / Making Her Mark** – heritage projects in partnership with Paisley Museum and Glasgow Women’s Library
- **WhatsApp Groups** – to meet likeminded women in the community
- **Kairos Chronicle** – community magazine open to submissions from women across Renfrewshire
- **Brew and a Blether** – Kairos podcast exploring local women’s lives

We will review:

- **Virtual Drop-in** – low attendance at this group so we will review its purpose
- **Online video classes** – reduced engagement following the first easing of restrictions. We will review the benefit of these classes with the volunteer team.
- **Travelling Book Club** – this was a great lockdown project, how valuable is it in this new context?



Final thoughts

This has been an extremely valuable consultation period and marks the third consultation of 2020. We plan to undertake a larger consultation every summer to hear from both participating and non-participating women. We are grateful to all the women and non-binary people who took the time to share their thoughts and ideas with us.

We are always seeking to develop our methods of community-led work and coproduction. Currently, we work alongside women to implement their ideas, for example, International Women's Day Asian Experience, LGBTQ+ Event and our Kairos Kitchen project. Since lockdown, we have been looking at ways to create a digital feedback process that allows volunteers and participants to share comments, feedback and project ideas with staff regularly. Their ideas will be taken to a regular volunteer meeting to be voted on and then implemented.

We're extremely proud of our community during this period. We have pulled together and found ways to work differently. Every step of the way our volunteer team and wider community have been the beating heart at the centre of this work. We can't wait to see what happens next!

Appendix 1 Demographics of women

77 respondents

- **Age:** 16-25 (8%), 26-35 (9%), 36-45 (19%), 46-55 (30%), 56-65 (22%) and 66-75 (12%).
- **Area:** Johnstone and Linwood 32%, Paisley 30%, Renfrew 13%, Erskine 6%, the Villages 15% and other 4%.
- **Ethnicity:** White Scottish / British (89%), White Other (3%), Asian Scottish / British (4%), Asian Indian / Pakistani / Bangladeshi / Chinese (1%), Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Groups (1%) and Gypsy or Irish Traveller (1%).
- **Participation:** 34% (32) - participating women; 16% (11) – volunteers; 50% (34) - non-participating women (yet to access Kairos)

Appendix 2 Data from the survey in full

Themes	What you told us
Bringing women together & providing a base	<p><i>“Bringing women together in whatever way possible.”</i></p> <p><i>“Providing a base to join likeminded women to challenge ourselves and support each other.”</i></p> <p><i>“Developing ways of connecting with women who would benefit from self-led groups”</i></p> <p><i>“Providing a safe space.”</i></p> <p><i>“Helping women connect.”</i></p> <p><i>“Bringing together different ages and cultures.”</i></p> <p><i>“Much the same as you are doing- listening to women and monitoring their needs, finding creative ways to involve everyone and encourage a collaborative approach to supporting each other.”</i></p> <p><i>“Offer ways to link up and support one another.”</i></p> <p><i>“Provide women with a safe place to meet.”</i></p> <p><i>“I’d like to know people in the community and take part. So i think creating opportunities for this sort of thing would be a support for others who are isolated, good for mental health and community building for new challenges in the future.”</i></p> <p><i>“Finding ways to bring them together.”</i></p> <p><i>“Set up daily chat room.”</i></p>
Mental Health Support	<p><i>“Listening ear and helping with mental health.”</i></p> <p><i>“Giving support with meetings, calls, and walks and talks”</i></p> <p><i>“Helping each women achieve their full potential no matter where their starting point is.”</i></p> <p><i>“Reducing isolation. Focusing on mental wellbeing, giving women a range of opportunities to be well.”</i></p> <p><i>“121 support.”</i></p> <p><i>“Keeping in touch, which they are doing. It’s amazing.”</i></p> <p><i>“Carry on being there :-)”</i></p> <p><i>“Lending an ear, support, advice & a helping hand.”</i></p> <p><i>“Ensuring women who are suffering from poor mental health are fully supported in their journey to recovery. From beginning, to full and total recovery.”</i></p> <p><i>“Keeping in touch with the families and community more.”</i></p> <p><i>“Supporting mental health.”</i></p> <p><i>“personal development opportunities.”</i></p> <p><i>“Phone / zoom/ facetime, door to door contact.”</i></p> <p><i>“Would like to see more aimed at mental health!”</i></p> <p><i>“What you are already doing - keeping in touch. Nice to know that there is someone else thinking of you.”</i></p>

	<p><i>"Helping to ease loneliness and an ear to listen."</i></p> <p><i>"There could be access to local groups for the lonely, women struggling to eat and pay bills, mental health if they are altogether then they can help each other with these things."</i></p>
Online activity	<p><i>"Having a website which we advertise locally and through social media"</i></p> <p><i>"Kairos Bake Off linked to Kairos Kitchen"</i></p> <p><i>"Ongoing online support and activities during this rubbish Covid time to reduce isolation and to give a sense of purpose"</i></p> <p><i>"Make a website"</i></p> <p><i>"Continue offering Zoom classes/discussions and hopefully get back to face to face ASAP"</i></p> <p><i>"Connecting different groups via online (zoom) with the community of Renfrewshire."</i></p> <p><i>"Zoom chat. Quiz on zoom."</i></p> <p><i>"Maybe online classes groups. Food justice."</i></p> <p><i>"Bringing women together, even digitally so they don't feel alone."</i></p> <p><i>"I think more online events and groups would be fantastic, especially one explaining to those that may not know and emphasising intersectional feminism."</i></p>
Outreach and reaching out	<p><i>"Engaging with women in groups locally in their own towns. Using local spaces to meet."</i></p> <p><i>"Widen audience for Kairos because it is so worthwhile."</i></p> <p><i>"Listening to women already involved in Kairos."</i></p> <p><i>"Have another place nearer me in Renfrew or Paisley."</i></p> <p><i>"Offering services local with no need to travel to other towns."</i></p> <p><i>"Activities in all areas of Renfrewshire."</i></p> <p><i>"Actively outreaching to women of all social groups, ethnicity, sexuality and ages."</i></p>
Outdoor Activity	<p><i>"Socially distanced walking groups, forest bathing routes, bike hire, cycling groups, outdoor art classes"</i></p> <p><i>"Picnics, Drop-in outdoors, socially distanced karaoke, bring your brew to the park."</i></p> <p><i>"Maybe more activities: walking, swimming, yoga"</i></p> <p><i>"Outdoor activities like walking groups, car park socials, social distanced pamper sessions."</i></p>
Signposting and links with other services	<p><i>"Supporting those in greatest need... perhaps referred from other third sector services"</i></p> <p><i>"Helping to signpost women to any extra help or support they may require."</i></p> <p><i>"Offering a joint service"</i></p> <p><i>"Link in with some more incredible local groups to reach more."</i></p> <p><i>"With more lockdown restrictions looming, it would be good to signpost or share information on resources/mutual aid available to women in Renfrewshire alongside Kairos other work."</i></p> <p><i>"signposting, we need one reliable place that can tell us who to ask for whatever help we need."</i></p> <p><i>"Provide women with a safe place to meet, get advice and support on services available to them."</i></p>
Working with families and young people	<p><i>"Providing weekend access for parents and kids together"</i></p> <p><i>"Do some work with Renfrewshire youth services to open a gateway to young people."</i></p> <p><i>"Working with women in their homes with their families. Working with young women 16 yrs and older re mental health and affect covid had had on their lives at the moment."</i></p>

<p>Responding to Violence Against Women</p>	<p><i>“Helping women raise their children and to break intergenerational trauma.”</i></p> <p><i>“Tackle problems like bullying and abuse in the early years and school to give girls today the chance to be the women of tomorrow by lowering the risk factor for future health by reducing adversity in childhood.”</i></p> <p><i>“Tackle violence against women.”</i></p> <p><i>“I was thinking about some kind of support group... even online for women going through domestic abuse also for those separated/divorce with kids still dealing with abuse, contact problems etc.”</i></p>
<p>Other</p>	<p><i>“Art groups, Carer groups”</i></p> <p><i>“Campaigning on behalf of women in Renfrewshire on issues that matter to them”</i></p> <p><i>“Challenge close minds and educate encouraging individual growth and acceptance of all.”</i></p> <p><i>“Giving those a voice who don’t as yet have one.”</i></p> <p><i>“Drop in, cuppa, show a film, relaxation”</i></p> <p><i>“We need hope.”</i></p> <p><i>“Think Kairos is doing their best just now”</i></p> <p><i>“I think Kairos are doing a lot already as far as supporting the community.”</i></p> <p><i>“Kairos best women group in Scotland.”</i></p> <p><i>“Continue to do what they do best- welcome, listen, support, encourage, believe in, give responsibility to, love and laugh with.”</i></p>