

Women and Equalities Committee

Oral evidence: Misogyny in music, HC 317

Wednesday 8 February 2023

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[Watch the meeting](#)

Members present: Caroline Nokes (Chair); Elliot Colburn; Kim Johnson, Kate Osborne and Bell Ribeiro-Addy

Questions 51 - 98

Witnesses

I: Vanessa Threadgold, Founder and Managing Director, Cactus City Studio; Melinda Kelly, Member of Management Team, Safe Gigs for Women; Vick Bain, Founder, F-List and Nadia Khan, CEO, Women in CTRL.

Written evidence from witnesses:

Vanessa Threadgold, Cactus City Studio [\[MiM0027\]](#)

Nadia Khan, Women in CTRL [\[MiM0033\]](#)

Vick Bain, F-List [\[MiM0034\]](#)

Examination of witnesses

Witnesses: Vanessa Threadgold, Melinda Kelly, Vick Bain and Nadia Khan.

Q51 Chair: Welcome to this Women and Equalities Committee and part of our inquiry into misogyny in music. Can I thank our witnesses this afternoon for coming along to give evidence? We have Vick Bain, founder of the F-List for Music; Mel Kelly, volunteer and member of the management team at Safe Gigs for Women, Nadia Khan, the founder of Women in CTRL, and Vanessa Threadgold, founder and managing director of Cactus City Studio. Questions will come to you from the Members of the Committee in turn, and we will usually indicate which witness it is that we wish to answer. If, at any point, any of you wish to come in, please raise your hand and the Committee Member will bring you in at an appropriate moment.

Can I start with Vick, please, and some questions about lyrics, particularly lyrics that, I am going to use the word, “celebrate” violence against women and girls? Your 2019 report, Counting the Music Industry, found that 80% of record label artists are male. Does that account for the prevalence of misogynistic lyrics, or are there other motivations or causes to that?

Vick Bain: I certainly believe so and, in fact, the percentage of female songwriters is even fewer. So, 14% of musicians who are signed to UK music publishing companies as composers or songwriters are women. With such a huge dominance of men as both songwriters and musicians, the songs they create are going to be from a male viewpoint.

Q52 Chair: Thank you. Because it is topical, it is going to be inevitable that I ask you about “Delilah”. Is there an issue with music where people do not necessarily listen to the lyrics, they have no consciousness of what they are? We all knew the chorus. We had not, perhaps until last week, started looking at the content. What can we do about that?

Vick Bain: Many years ago, I met the writers of “Delilah” and, according to them, this was part of a great tradition of folk songs, which are around the abuse and murder of women—that is not something particular to my taste—and, again, it is because there is such a prevalence and dominance of male songwriters. In the 1960s, it was even more male-dominated. We need the music industry to sign more women, to invest in more female musicians, and then we will have songs of a different nature.

Q53 Chair: Has there been any research done to indicate that women write different types of lyrics, and is it quantifiable?

Vick Bain: I would have to get back to you on that particular point, but I certainly know my own personal experience of women who write songs is that they write songs about parenthood, having children or not having children. They are writing songs with a song content from a much more female-orientated standpoint.



Q54 Chair: Within the industry, how can we encourage the record companies, the labels, to look at promoting female talent, to foster and encourage female songwriting talent?

Vick Bain: Before I published Counting the Music Industry in 2019, no one really knew just how bad the problem was. I analysed over 300 music publishing companies and record labels, looked at their rosters and did that analysis. No one had done that before. I think it surprised the music industry just how bad it was. Now, if you speak to women in music, we all say, "Well, I knew that," but having the data, having the research and the statistics is vitally important.

Chair: Thank you. As Feargal Sharkey was a very prominent face of the "It is a tradition in folk music" defence, I listened to what he was saying about, "Look, this is just a traditional style of music." Has it got any better since then? Is somebody going to come to me with the defence that rap and grime artists are just using traditional folk music as their inspiration?

Vick Bain: I have not heard that argument.

Q55 Chair: No? Do you think there is any sign of it getting better, or is it getting worse? If we accept that "Delilah" is a song of the 1960s, are lyrics better now? Are they less misogynistic, or is it worse?

Vick Bain: I do not know; I have not done that analysis. I am sure there is research out there, which has maybe done a decade-by-decade analysis, but I do not know of it.

Q56 Chair: Nadia, you were nodding. Do you have any thoughts on that?

Nadia Khan: My view on misogynistic lyrics is that they are so prevalent and widespread in popular music. I have seen some research to show that it is not just in specific genres and that popular music has over a third of misogynistic lyrics. My view is that it is a representation of societal views and societal norms, and it is a reflection of the misogynistic culture that is apparent within society but also within the music industry and the structures that women have to work with.

Leaning into some of Vick's data, Women in CTRL also did a study looking into the breakdown of the top 100 most played songs on radio over the period of a year, and we found similar results to say that 18% of female songwriters and non-binary artists were credited as songwriters, and only 2.6% of producers credited.

A really interesting stat that came out of that, as well, was that male artists featured on 81% of all records. I found a really interesting feature that was written in BBC News that had looked back over a decade, looking at how many women solo artists there were appearing in the charts. It is a really interesting exercise to do because what has been tracked decade-by-decade with this data is that women artists are having



to collaborate, or their vocals are being used on male-led records in order for them to have chart success.

We can think of examples in dance music where there are more producer-led campaigns. I think Becky Hill is a great example of this in the press. She was spoken of as the most unknown pop star where her songs were played at festivals and everybody was singing them, but they did not know who she was. Another great example is a vocalist called Kelli-Leigh. Her vocals were used—I think it was a Jax Jones song; I cannot remember the name of the song—and she was just paid a session musician fee to re-sing a Whitney vocal. That song blew up, was a huge record, and she did not get any future royalties from that but also her name was not credited. It is also an issue about using women's vocals.

In terms of just the content within lyrics, obviously, if the majority of songs are from a male perspective, we are losing that women's perspective in the narrative behind songs that are being put out there.

I always like to bring it back to, in the population, women are 51%, but in the music industry, it feels like we are talking about women as though we are a niche genre or a specialist subject. "Oh, can we get support for this minority?" which is not the case. I think what Vick said is very true. I often speak of her research and reports in the conversations I am having because it seems like there is almost a veil over the industry where women that work in the industry are fully aware of these issues, but, without the data, we are not taken seriously and there are no conversations being had about it.

Q57 Chair: Can we have a conversation about something else topical? I might ask all the panel if they want to comment on it. You have just made some comments about the almost invisibility of women. Talk to me about best artist awards and whether that helps or hinders women. Should there still be best female artist at the BRITs?

Nadia Khan: From the BRIT's perspective, it was probably done with the intention of improving inclusivity. It is an idealistic viewpoint and, personally, I do not think that we are ready or we are there yet.

Q58 Chair: How can you be if 25% of artists are women?

Nadia Khan: Exactly. It is also about talking about eligibility criteria. I know it is a voting academy, so I know that there were 70 artists who were eligible for this award category. I know that out of the 70, 12 were women, but when it was put out to the voting academy, they did not choose five women for the shortlist. Again, we are talking about a music industry that is in a vicious cycle. There is no one person or one place to pinpoint the blame.

Vick's research, looking at the representation of women in record labels, 19%; in publishers, 14%; PRS for Music—a collection society for songwriters and composers—has 160,000 members, but only 18% are women. That number has risen dramatically in the last three or four



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years. I think it was something like 13% or 14% only a few years ago. We know that women are not getting booked for live shows. Promoters are not booking them for live events.

I work as a manager in the industry, and I have had conversations with A&Rs who are booking or playlisting on radio where I have been told, "Women artists don't test well on radio so, therefore, we are not going to programme them." They get skipped more by DSP platforms, on streaming platforms, and, therefore, the algorithm negatively affects them and they move down playlists or are removed completely.

With labels, if I am taking an artist in to pitch them, the conversation is very much driven towards, "Well, what do they look like?" or, "Oh, we've already got a woman signed, how is she different?" There is often this comparison. Again, just before I close, going back to the study we did looking at the top 100 artists and the breakdown of that, I have seen something dubbed the "Adele effect". Again, going back to the BRITs, I think the fact that Dua Lipa and Adele did not release albums within the eligible time period, kind of takes the mask away to say, "Do you know what, actually, where are the women artists?" It has been dubbed the "Adele effect".

I feel like I am being gaslit multiple times a day in my career in the music industry when I am talking to people and telling them this and they are saying, "What are you talking about? Adele's massive," or "Dua Lipa's huge." If you go through the charts and count how many unique women artists are there, it is only a handful because only a select few are allowed to get through to that next level.

Chair: Thank you. Mel, did you want to add anything on that?

Melinda Kelly: That is outside my area, so, no.

Chair: Vanessa, did you have any comments?

Vanessa Threadgold: From my perspective, it is very easy to look at the things that the general public will look at, such as festival line-ups and the charts, but we see the problem lying in the barriers to entry to the music industry. Around equal gender-split enter the industry at the very start, but the environment is set up in a way that it is actually very unwelcoming to women, whether that be from a childcare perspective or just from the nature of the sexual harassment and the sexualisation and misogyny that is present. It creates an environment where people do not want to stay in the industry because, generally, it is just unpleasant to be there or you are classed as a token or a novelty and you are not taken seriously, as Nadia was speaking about.

That then creates a landscape where, behind the scenes, you have more men at every level moving up the career ladder. They are the people that make the decisions, therefore, just from their natural bias and prejudice, they often go to men because they feel that it is easier for them to work



with people who look like them and people who sound like them. That is where we see the problems starting, and that is where, from our organisation's perspective, we like to look at the root causes of these problems.

The recording studio is one of those spaces where women are not spoken to when they enter the room. That is a really common problem where they are just ignored because maybe they are perceived as a girlfriend or a groupie. Men have told us they do not speak to the women just in case they are the girlfriend of the man that is present, and they then react badly. It is still the same problem that we are all facing. We are facing this awful issue of violence against women and girls but also the toxic masculinity that is present.

If we are talking about places like the recording studio and education for that very beginning stage of your career, if that is such a toxic and difficult environment to exist in, most people are not going to stay in that industry, and they are going to leave and then it becomes a fight to stay in the industry. We often look at the landscape and think it is not a nice landscape to be in. People ask us why we stay here. It is because we love making music and we love creating, so we are trying to make kinder, more gentle environments that are suitable for women to exist in, but that is very difficult to do when we are fighting against something that has existed in its current state for so long.

We are also fighting against the perception that people are lucky to work in the industry, so you are then expected to accept the treatment that is there. You are lucky to be here so, therefore, you should expect this to happen to you because you have a great position. There is that sort of smoke and mirrors of the glamour of it, whereas it is not that glamorous behind the scenes, and I am sure many women who work in the industry will tell you that. It is a very difficult job and there is a lot of work that goes into it.

Often people work for a very long time for free to be in the industry, and that is another part of the nature and exploitativeness of it. That means people can work in low-paid roles at a label. You are looking at being paid 50% of what you are paid for, potentially, the same role in a bank or finance department. Therefore, people who are from a low socioeconomic background might not be able to enter the industry, so it creates all these other barriers as well. That is what creates this male dominance within it.

Q59 Kim Johnson: My first question is to you, Vanessa. You have just spoken about the role of women in the recording studio. I would like to know what you can say about the barriers that women face in music production, and what needs to be done to break that barrier.

Vanessa Threadgold: It is the perception that women cannot do the job. It is a lot of getting men on board. We ask them to be more proactive. With our organisation, we have created a charter of good practice. We are asking people who work in studios to be more proactive



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in understanding that women are facing these barriers and we should not have to be the ones who are constantly fighting. They should join us in that fight if they care about women's rights and women's safety and create more safe environments. That is one of the things that we are asking people to do.

It can be quite difficult, one of the reasons being that sometimes studios tell us that as there are so many freelancers that work in the space, they do not want to be responsible for the actions they are perpetrating within the studios. They sometimes say, "We can't sign up to this because, actually, we feel like we'll lose business from people who are here in our studios to create a party environment or a more casual working environment, and we want to take advantage of that." It is difficult in that sense.

From our perspective, we try to look at things from a positive viewpoint in that if we can point people in the direction of these spaces that are happy to make their spaces safer, then we are able to draw more attention to these kinds of places and we can take people out of their bedroom studios, because many women learn to produce themselves rather than having to go into studio environments. They set up at home and there are thousands of content creators recording studio content online, which is great, it is amazing for creativity, but it is not so great when we are looking at collaborating, and it is not so great when we are looking at learning things on the job and getting into the industry at, I suppose, a more professional level. We want to be able to bring people—

Q60 Kim Johnson: Sorry, Vanessa. I think you are making a really important point there about training and for more women to get into the business. I was thinking about careers advice and guidance and talking to women to say this is possible. If somebody was going to a school and says, "Well, I'm involved in music production. This is how it works; this is how you get on; these are the contacts." I think, because the industry is not developed in that way, it has those barriers.

Looking at opportunities to train, does any of that work currently take place? Are people going into schools and being involved in careers guidance in terms of the arts and cultural sector, particularly in the backroom section of arts and culture?

Vanessa Threadgold: It does take place, for sure, but it is difficult. People say it is difficult to find female tutors, but I do not think it is. I just think that the networks are not connected. That is something we are looking at. We are building a database of producers on top of building the database of studios. There is also something called 2% RISING, which is a collective of female and non-binary producers that all work together and help each other with work. Sometimes, it is really just drawing attention to these things.

Q61 Kim Johnson: Thank you very much for answering those questions, Vanessa. Nadia, how does gender and balance in senior leadership



contribute to the misogynistic culture in the industry?

Nadia Kahn: This is an issue I have spoken widely on and done some reporting on as well, just looking at the under-representation of women in senior leadership roles. I did a report with Women in CTRL called *Seat at the Table*, which looked at the representation of women in the boardrooms across the UK music trade bodies who represent different organisations, composers, producers, managers, major labels, independent record labels, etc. Overall, the findings were that there were only 34% of women holding board seats. Obviously, that is just an average across those organisations. Some organisations had more equal parity. Some other organisations were leaning down where they only had one woman sitting on a board of 16 seats, or three women sitting on a board of 27 seats.

My view is that it definitely is a leading cause of a lot of the misogynistic views that are still consistently going on in the industry because we do not have the gatekeepers and the decision-makers at the top who are women. There is a big issue around the gender pay gap in the industry as well, which I would like to share some stats on, if possible.

In 2021, Universal Music reported a gender pay gap of 29%; in 2022, 31%. Warner Music in 2021 reported a gender pay gap of 30%. In 2022 that rose to 36% or nearly 37%. Sony Music in 2021 reported a gender pay gap of 25%. In 2022 that rose to 27%. Currently, it is only mandatory for organisations with more than 250 employees to report their gender pay gap. As Vanessa pointed out, over 70% of the workforce is made up of freelancers, so it is quite challenging for us to access this data. It is really frustrating to see this data released year-on-year and those numbers are not improving. The gender pay gap is a direct insight into where the leadership lies within some of the bigger organisations.

I would like to see more salary transparency around organisations and, having had conversations with smaller companies or freelancers, to understand the challenges that organisations which are not of that size have with putting their reporting together. I know the UK Music Diversity Ten-Point Plan recommended that organisations with over 50 employees start to do gender pay gap reporting and ethnicity pay gap reporting.

However, there are challenges for smaller organisations. Women in CTRL have put together a list of recommendations which I would like to submit to the panel in writing afterwards. The list gives simple ways that organisations can be more transparent. For example, including salary when they are putting out job adverts. Salary transparency can really help to eliminate the gender pay gap and ensure that women are fairly paid for the same jobs and roles as their male equivalents.

Q62 **Chair:** Can I just interject on that? Is there a challenge around salary and gender pay gap reporting when so many in the industry are freelance? Is it just going to mask the figures?



Nadia Khan: Yes, there is a challenge with the smaller companies, but, for freelancers, potentially, there could be a framework because research has shown that when women are asked for their freelance rates versus men asking for their freelance rates, they go in at a lower rate. It is called the music business, so everyone is always trying to undercut and, unfortunately, the women are often at the brunt end of this deal. Also, women of colour have to face discrimination twice. There are solutions around it, but it is a challenge with smaller companies.

Q63 **Kim Johnson:** Nadia, there is a perception that women will play an integral role in the business because of their involvement, but it is not happening. What do you think needs to happen to improve more diverse representation?

Nadia Khan: All organisations need to do an internal review and look at their own diversity, look at the diversity in their leadership teams. There are simple steps that companies can take. When I said about salary transparency, again, having more women in the leadership around the table is going to bring more women's perspectives and lived experiences into consideration. There is a lack of women in your rosters. Then look at hiring more women A&Rs or look at making that a dedicated target that you are going to work on.

We are about to launch the recruitment for apprenticeship places in the music industry. It is a collaboration that Women in CTRL have done with AIM and also Amazon Music, which is a streaming platform, which has identified this pipeline issue and want to actively do something about it. We are bringing six apprenticeship places into place to support independent labels and giving them an investment towards their salary as well as providing the training, tapping into the Government Apprentice Levy, and specifically tasking these apprentices with getting involved in supporting and championing women in non-binary talent on rosters, and also supporting that output.

There are simple things that organisations can do if there is a will to do it, but it feels like a very vast problem. When you talk about the issues being so prevalent across every sector, it feels really overwhelming at times. Every organisation needs to take accountability. If they are not going to, then there needs to be quotas put in place.

As women's organisations, we struggle to get funding. We struggled to get the resources for Vick to do that report and sit and work through 300 labels. We are taking our own time to do these reports and no one listens to the findings as well. We are constantly banging on people's doors. If people are not going to listen and take accountability, like I said, maybe there needs to be quotas in place for tracking on radio. I know the BBC have the 50:50 project and they have created a tracker with Stanford University and, potentially, that is something that could be put into this. I do not think, given the chance the industry has had, that they are able to solve this problem themselves at the minute. It needs to be a collective action from all areas of the industry.



Q64 Kim Johnson: Thanks. The apprenticeship scheme is a really positive example where change can start taking place, so thank you for sharing that information with me. Next question to Vick. Many organisations in the industry fail to support women with issues like maternity. What impact does this have, and what could the Government and industry do to improve this?

Vick Bain: I have experienced this myself. Back in 1999, I was working for a music company, but I was on a temporary contract. I became pregnant, had twins, immediately lost my job, and certainly did not get any maternity cover. Having experienced this, I know this is a big problem. I act as a trustee on Parents and Carers in Performing Arts, which does specific research into this and how creative organisations can better support the parents within their workforce.

There is research going on; there are models that organisations can implement to bring in more flexible working, but it is clear that stopping maternity discrimination should be a very high priority, no matter what industry you work in, and better childcare. I do not know if I would be able to get back into work now. I was able to 20 years ago because there was more state nursery provision. I was very fortunate to live within a catchment area and get my children into a state nursery when they were about two years old. I understand that those places have long gone now. There is a lot more the music industry can do to better support women getting back into work, but there are also things that Government can do.

Q65 Kim Johnson: Thanks, Vick. I am also the mother of twins, so I appreciate the difficulty you went through. You have all alluded to the fact that a lot of women tend to be working on their own and not in organisations, but it is about how do women access information about their rights. I was going to ask whether you thought music unions are a way and means of helping support women in some of those issues that you have just raised, Vick.

Vick Bain: I am president of another organisation called the Independent Society of Musicians, which has over 11,000 members. It is actually the only membership organisation in music which has a majority female membership. The legal team there is fantastic. They have six in-house lawyers who work on cases all the time. I would strongly recommend that if anyone—not just a musician, but a music professional—needed legal advice they should go and look at the ISM. I know there are other organisations who look after other disciplines and job specialisations as well, so even if they do not have in-house lawyers, they might be able to make a recommendation to a law firm which can do some pro bono.

Q66 Kate Osborne: If I can ask my first question to Nadia, please? A lot of the music industry is made up of smaller companies and—leading on a similar theme from Kim's questions—a lot of them do not have HR departments. I just wondered if you could tell us the effect that that has on women's ability to report on misogyny.



Nadia Khan: Yes, it is very challenging for women working alone. First of all, I would like to share some of my own experiences. I have been working in the music industry for over 20 years. I primarily work as a music manager and many music managers work independently in silos by themselves, or they may work with a smaller group of other managers in smaller companies. Over the period of my career, I have experienced bullying and harassment. I have been undermined constantly on varying different levels. I have felt invisible when I have walked into rooms, been perceived or deemed to be just an assistant or a groupie. I have been kicked off festival stages while my artist is on stage performing because security does not believe that I could be the manager. I have been laughed away by bouncers at the front of shows who have not believed that I am the manager.

As I said, I have done this job for over 20 years and about a decade into my career, it really had an impact on me. A lot of these things are unconscious bias-led where people cannot deem that a younger woman would be taking up a position of authority. Many times, indeed, I might have had a male counterpart standing beside me or somebody that I am training, and people will go directly to them and assume they are the manager. This still happens to me today. As an independent manager, I am working with independent artists. I will be the video commissioner, I will be the one setting the budgets, booking all the crew and I will walk into the video set, and it still happens. It happened to me about a month ago. I walk in and somebody says, "Oh, are you the stylist?" or, "Are you the make-up artist?" or, "Are you the extra?" and I get ushered and I have to correct them and say, "No, I'm the manager." This happens all the time. It is not something I get offended about on a daily basis, but it does chip away at your confidence.

As Vanessa touched on, it is like we are almost told in this industry that you should be grateful for your position. I am having a successful career. I am doing the perks of the job. I am lucky to be going into these festivals, getting backstage access and going to these parties and going to all these award shows. But the reality is, it is really damaging, and it really chips away at your confidence, which is what led me to start up Women in CTRL. The saddest thing about starting up Women in CTRL was that I wanted to have really honest conversations with other women, and after being quiet and silenced and feeling ashamed about my own experiences, pretty much every woman that I had spoken to had the same experiences, and there was nowhere to turn.

In terms of other freelancers, it is really challenging. You might be working as a PR person and you have one client and they might give you three or four different avenues of business. If there is a breakdown of that relationship with that client, you have to make the decision, do I just let things slide or do I bring this up? Or who do I report it to? A lot of women come to me, and when they come to Women in CTRL, they may have already exhausted all the other avenues open to them. It is really



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frustrating because they have done all the right steps, they have reported.

In my own incident where I was sexually harassed after an event, I woke up and somebody was on top of me trying to take my clothes off. This is somebody who works in the industry. This is somebody who I then had to be around multiple times. When I tried to bring it up, in terms of confronting that person with the group, all I got was an apology and a denial to say, "No, I just came in to say goodbye." I did not want to burn the bridge because this person has a spot on radio, or I am going to see them again at events. You have to weigh it up in a decision and say, "Well, what's the right business choice for me to make?" "How am I going to ensure that I pay my bills?"

There are no accurate methods of reporting and, unfortunately, when we did a report looking at women in radio, we spoke to over 100 women who work in radio as their main job at BBC, Bauer, Global and some of the community stations and nobody would give us statements with their name attached because everyone is scared to speak out. They do not want to face the repercussions, and those people that have spoken out, their careers are negatively impacted because of it as well.

Vanessa Threadgold: Can I add something there, please?

Q67 **Kate Osborne:** I am going to ask you a question along very similar lines. If I can come back to you in a minute?

Vanessa Threadgold: Yes, sure.

Q68 **Kate Osborne:** Nadia, first of all, thank you for sharing that very personal information with us. Unfortunately, we see similar across a lot of industries, including in this place I have to say. Vanessa, if I can move to you? If this does not cover what you were going to say then, please, go on to say whatever you were going to say before. I wanted to ask you how significant the risk is of losing out on career progression, etc. How significant is it in dissuading women from reporting misogyny in the first place?

Vanessa Threadgold: I do not think it is the most significant issue just for women. It is an issue for men as well. That economic threat, the threat of losing your job, losing your income, does not just impact the women in the industry; it impacts everyone. That helps maintain the silence within the space. Again, when we have this nature of, "You are very lucky to be here, therefore, you should accept this," it happens to all of us. It is not just to women; it also stops men from speaking about it, speaking about their colleagues, doing anything about it. You will be perceived as someone who is causing trouble, and you are just disregarded.

We see it in all industries where people get themselves into a position of power to be able to, unfortunately, take advantage of that. Whether they had that intention in the first place or whether that is just an



opportunistic thing that happens at the end of it, it does happen a lot and we see the economic element of it as being the strongest factor in why people will not report things there. It is the general societal and cultural issues of feeling like you will not be believed and feeling like people will not do anything about it that impacts us all within the music industry. It is that economic threat.

Q69 Kate Osborne: Thank you. Your written submission mentioned incidents where major labels did not allow employees to take part in panels on combating inequalities. How widespread is that?

Vanessa Threadgold: It is difficult because they often have to go to legal. Depending on the position they are in, often people can come and be on another panel if you are not talking about in-depth issues, but if you are talking about something in-depth then most people are not allowed to speak on certain panels. They may not be allowed to speak to certain organisations at all. We often exist in, I suppose, whisper groups, which is the unconventional way of us trying to protect each other. I do not like to speak for everyone because I really feel that protecting people is a big part of my job, but that is something that is a widespread issue.

Kate Osborne: Thank you. Mel, you were nodding. Did you want to come in?

Melinda Kelly: My work is primarily with audiences and not with people who are involved in the industry. In our work with women who have suffered sexual harassment, sexual assault and sexual violence at live music events, it is exactly that same thing, these whisper groups. Everybody knows that it happens, but nobody wants to say anything. They do not want to be seen as whining or complaining or, "Maybe I did drink too much," or, "Maybe this other thing did happen to me and it's my fault." There are very few voices out there who will stand up and go, "Actually, you know what, it's not right and it's not your fault," and want to bring these issues out into the open.

We have had real success in the last few years, getting people talking about sexual violence in crowds at live music events, but it is the same problem. Every woman I have spoken to has had something along that line happen to them, be they a professional, a tour manager. I interact with a lot of tour managers, a lot of merch people, a lot of crew and they will say, "Oh, yeah, you know, this happens." Everybody knows the guy who behaves that way, but from the industry down to the audience, there does not seem to be any will to combat that and talk among each other that happens because nobody is brave enough to take that first step.

Vick Bain: Can I come in and say I believe there is a misuse of non-disclosure agreements as well. Not only are women not brave enough to step forward, they legally cannot. I co-authored a report last year with the ISM, the Dignity at Work 2 report, which had 660 responses from both men and women, but the majority from women, most of whom had experienced sexual harassment, and 10% of those respondents had



signed some sort of settlement agreement, which goes hand-in-hand with a non-disclosure agreement. You are going to have trouble having people coming forward to be able to say what has happened to them because they are gagged.

Melinda Kelly: Yes. Just to be clear, when I say brave enough, I mean the big companies, the Warners and all of that, have not been brave enough to tackle that within themselves. I do not mean the women themselves are not brave enough to do anything.

Q70 **Kate Osborne:** Thank you. Vanessa, if I can come back to you? Do you think there is a lack of awareness of the support organisations available to women, and do you think that is due to a lack of investment in them?

Vanessa Threadgold: When we reach out to our community and ask them to tell us of the organisations they are aware of, most of them are not aware of any support at all. There is support out there. It is general and it is vague, and it covers all musicians, but there is nothing specific to women in regard to support for this. Investment is the biggest problem. In our organisation, we are set up to help women break down barriers and also deal with coming back into the music industry after they have experienced bad behaviours in safer spaces, but the majority of our funding comes directly from us. We personally put the money in to make this happen. We often see organisations do projects, which are great big PR projects, and say, "We are going to create these 100% women albums," or, "We are going to do this 100% women line-up," which is great for representation, but it does not help with the root problems and the problems behind the scenes. Unfortunately, the cost of it is probably underestimated as well. There definitely is no investment into it.

It is a vicious cycle of, if you invest into this issue you are going to give people their voice back and people do not want people to have their voice back because if you help people through these issues, they are able to talk about them. They are able to talk about them in a way that feels coherent, and it does not feel like it is rambling to people. People are taken seriously at that point and that is where, potentially, the industry does not want to invest so that people are able to discuss these issues because we would see a MeToo for the music industry. We always talk about scratching the surface of MeToo, but it has not quite happened yet.

Unfortunately—as the majority of the panel has said—every single woman we speak to has had a similar or the same experience almost to a point where they do not need to speak about it any more. They just understand why we do what we do. The investment is a huge problem. We see it is a big problem. The lack of resources is huge, and it creates this environment where, often, the organisations, which are all doing incredible work, and different roles as well, are fighting for the same pots of funding. You need a holistic circle of support around these issues that look at different issues and focus on different issues. Everyone needs to be funded to do the different parts of the solution that need to happen.



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Q71 Kate Osborne: The way we think about the music industry being a multi-million or billion-pound industry, certainly suggests that it is not simply a case of the finance not being available. When the industry has so much money, it is just choices. If I move on to you, Vick and, picking up on those points, how willing do you think the music industry is in wanting to combat misogyny?

Vick Bain: Not very. I paused because, of course, there are good people out there wanting to do good things and we have all worked with various music organisations over the years who are doing a little bit. For instance, on the F-List website, I have a page of what I call sister organisations. There are nearly 70 campaigns, initiatives, not-for-profit organisations and passion projects, which are mainly run by women based in the UK, looking at all sorts of intersectional aspects of diversity as well.

I would take a guess that probably 95% of us are self-funding those initiatives. I would love the music industry to properly support and work with us because we have the solution. We are doing that work. We are campaigning on behalf of female musicians. We know who those musicians are. We have our own directories of musicians and producers and women in music. We are doing training. We are doing it because we believe in this, and we are funding it. There are tiny little bits of projects which are being funded.

We were lucky enough to have run a project last year with Help Musicians and Miloco Studios getting women into professional recording studios with all-female production teams, which was fantastic, but it was only for four weekends a year. I am hoping they are going to continue it next year. It is very ad hoc. We need some proper support from the music industry to step forward and say, "Look, we want to work with you because we are here and willing and able to offer solutions."

Q72 Kate Osborne: Yes, and already doing it, as you say. I think it is around 70% of the workforce are freelancers and more vulnerable. To what degree are the freelancers—I know we have already touched on this—more vulnerable to misogynistic abuse compared to employees?

Vick Bain: It is a huge problem. For musicians, the statistic is even higher. It is over 80%. The ONS Labour Force Survey showed 83% of musicians are freelance. Even if they do have some sort of contract—not everybody does—in writing, it is unclear whether they fall under the protection of the Equality Act. We would really like to see that clarified. We would really like freelance musicians who are signed to record labels and record label deals or other sorts of freelance contracts in music to have the scope of protection widened because these freelance workers need protection. Even if they do have some protection, maybe they are not aware. They are not aware that they have these rights and the people who are employing them are maybe unaware that they have responsibilities over those freelancers as well. There is a lot of work to be done in educating everyone.



Q73 **Kate Osborne:** Where the freelancers are aware, how difficult is it for them to report instances of misogyny?

Vick Bain: Sorry, can you repeat the question?

Q74 **Kate Osborne:** Yes. How difficult is it for freelancers to report misogyny when they are aware that they have rights?

Vick Bain: They should get some legal advice straightaway because the window for them to be able to take action is, I think, three months, which is very soon. They might not even understand at first they have experienced harassment or discrimination. If they do get some advice, then they can make an informed decision on what pathways are available to them. If they decide to take legal action—as we have talked about before—that is a really big step because this is a small, informal, networked industry that relies on reputation.

In the Dignity at Work 2 report last year, three-quarters of people who had experienced harassment or discrimination decided not to report because, if they do, they might not get work again. We certainly had lots of people saying it would ruin their reputation and they would be victim-blamed and get a reputation for being a troublemaker.

Q75 **Kim Johnson:** Just picking up on some of those questions, I just wanted to know from the panel what role you think music streaming platforms have in identifying and raising awareness of these issues, and whether any of those streaming platforms are undertaking any of this work at the moment, such as Spotify etc.

Melinda Kelly: From our perspective, we have tried to make contact with some of the big streaming platforms so that we can promote our work with their audiences, and we have not had any success with that. We have certainly reached out to them, and perhaps it is just a matter of they are a very big company and maybe we did not know who to reach out to but—probably unanimously here—it is nothing.

Q76 **Kim Johnson:** Again, large companies making large amounts of money that should be investing in terms of challenging some of these issues. Maybe that is something that we could pick up on. Thanks. Go on, sorry.

Melinda Kelly: If I could just add something quickly. We do work with some of the big names in music and, often, because we are front of house facing, we feel like we are their badge of honour—we are looking after people, we are looking after their sexual safety—and I do not want to denigrate that, but it is great that we can work with these often very young people at live music events and teach them how to look after themselves and how to help other people in what is a massive crowd.

With all the best will in the world, if you are in a crowd of 100,000 people and security is way over there, you are not going to get that kind of help. I often feel, just personally, that we are the thing that they did and the thing that everyone sees on the banners and the jumbotrons at the big



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festivals when, in fact, their own crews are maybe not getting that level of attention, and yet they suffer the same sort of harassment and in many cases violence, sexual violence, as the audience members do.

Q77 Kim Johnson: Picking up on that point then, Mel, how much do you think festivals and venues are investing in terms of preventing sexual violence at events, and are they doing enough?

Melinda Kelly: We do not get any money from them. We are asked quite often to turn up, but we fund ourselves with t-shirt sales. We are an all-volunteer organisation. We are often fed, but there is no money. In terms of money, the Association of Independent Festivals had a big campaign before the pandemic in 2018, signing up and talking about sexual safety, and I am sure that there was some money there. In terms of big funding, other than having our presence at these big events—and we are just a very small organisation, frankly—I do not see a lot of money. I know the plural of anecdote is not data, but often some of the comments we get, like, “What about men's safety,” and, “What about the men?” often come from third-party security firms and—

Q78 Kim Johnson: Just picking up on that, given that we have large music festivals taking place here during the summer months, from your opinion, do they invest enough money to make sure women are safe at those venues? If not, what more should they be doing?

Melinda Kelly: No, I do not believe so. I believe they have made a good start from nothing, which is what existed when we came into view. I think a lot more could be done. There could be a lot more staff awareness. There could be a lot more specific training of security and other officers on-site to look after not just crowds, but musicians and crew. I think a whole lot more could be done to make sexual violence entirely unacceptable in live music spaces, anywhere from sticky-floored punk clubs all the way up to these massive festivals. Sometimes, it is a case of they do not have the money because they are quite a small organisation, and with the bigger organisations perhaps it is a case of they think money would be better spent elsewhere, particularly post-pandemic.

Q79 Kim Johnson: It could simply be a matter of doing some work with security staff and us.

Melinda Kelly: Yes, absolutely

Q80 Kim Johnson: It might not require a lot of money, but it might be about them being aware of what is going on. You mentioned about staff and security at some of those events, but some of those people could well be the perpetrators as well, so it is about how you deal with some of those issues.

Melinda Kelly: That is absolutely true, and we are aware that that has happened where a security staff member has been the perpetrator. People in this panel can correct me, but I go to lot of shows, and I am



there before the show because we are setting up and it is sometimes up to the individual artist to decide what security gets briefed on. There are some artists, particularly if we are at the show and they are familiar with our work, who are quite good, who will make sure the security briefing includes a briefing about sexual violence, sexual harassment, "We are zero tolerance; we do not do any of that," but if the artists themselves or their management do not specifically ask for it, that might not happen at the individual show level, so it is very hit and miss.

Q81 Kim Johnson: You mentioned before about—and I think some panel members also mentioned it—how women do not report these incidents to the police. What do you think needs to be done to encourage and support more women to do that? Is there a job of work to do with the police in terms of a level of understanding about these issues as well?

Melinda Kelly: Yes. Only 7% of people who had unwanted sexual attention at a festival reported that to the festival staff, and only 2% went to the police. Depending on your genre and depending on the values of the music community, a lot of people—particularly with some of the things that are happening with the Met—do not want to go to the police. They do not trust the police will do anything for them or help them in any way.

Equally, while there is often quite a lot of security, there is often not very many police on festival sites and at live music sites, depending on size. We often work—and we have worked in the past, although it is not our primary work—with small venues in making sure they have sexual safety policies and making sure that a bartender will know what to do if someone comes to them to say, "I've just been assaulted in the bathroom at your pub," during a live music event. Again, it is very hit and miss and there does not seem to be any kind of good police guidance as to how to deal with it in a live music setting.

Q82 Kim Johnson: A lot of these venues would have to get a licence from local authorities to operate. Do you think there needs to be something incorporated in terms of licensing around safety of women in their venues?

Melinda Kelly: That would certainly be a very good place to start, provided the expense of it would not then stop grassroots music venues being able to put on a show. But, yes, that would absolutely be a very good place to start if there was some sort of central guidance for audiences and for crew for anyone who is in their venue for a live music event, whether they are front of house or back of house, and for the venue to understand sexual violence does happen at live music events and how they should respond to it and work to prevent it in the first instance. Some venues are very good at it, and some venues are not.

Q83 Chair: Thank you. Mel, I am not going to ask you to name and shame. I am going to ask you to name and celebrate. Are there any festivals that are better than others?



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Melinda Kelly: 2000trees does very good work. We tend to work with Live Nation, and they have a set at all their big festivals like Reading and Leeds. They are doing a better job than they would have done, say, in 2015 when we started our organisation. There are some people who are definitely trying. The Association of Independent Festivals does a lot of good work with us and let us inform their active by-standing advice they gave to all their festivals. It is happening but, as I say, it is a bit hit and miss across the industry.

Q84 **Chair:** What anecdote can you give us about how well-trained security staff are, or in some cases are they part of the problem?

Melinda Kelly: They are part of the problem in some cases. Anecdotally, post-pandemic, a lot of people worked in security. You would see the same guys every show and they were great guys, and we really loved them, but we do not see them anymore because they got new jobs. They tend to be freelancers and third parties, sometimes contract staff as well so, post-pandemic, we are seeing people who did not work in live music at this level prior to the pandemic because it is, quite frankly, a very low-paid position and there is a skills shortage everywhere and I think that skills shortage also bleeds over into security at live shows.

Q85 **Chair:** I went to Glastonbury last summer—

Melinda Kelly: Good.

Q86 **Chair:** A cultural experience, and I visited the gold command and saw the police on-site. It seemed to me quite a reasonably-sized police presence. Is that unusual?

Melinda Kelly: I was at Left Field with Billy Bragg in 2018, but I have not been since then. I do not recall seeing many police, but then Glastonbury is such a big place. I did not get much past that little area that we were in, so I cannot really say. I do see police presence at the bigger festivals, but also, if I am honest, people will avoid police at the bigger festivals.

Q87 **Chair:** The comment that Avon and Somerset Police made to me was that they were very conscious that there was a massive reluctance from women to report to them, which is a huge barrier.

Melinda Kelly: Yes.

Chair: Vick, did you want to—

Vick Bain: I was just going to come in and say, with the F-List, we have been working with a number of much smaller independent festivals on a program we call Doing The Right Thing. It is celebrating and working with festivals who want to have equally balanced stages—because so many festivals have 80–90% men on stage—and also have a much more holistic and supportive view of the safety of the attendees so big shout-out to Out & Wild and Underneath the Stars and a few others, but it tends to be these smaller ones—the boutique 500, 1,000, not more than



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5,000 attendees—which are also predominantly run by women. More women in the whole ecosystem have a much bigger safety impact for the musicians and the audiences and fans.

Q88 Elliot Colburn: Vick, can I take you back to what you were saying earlier about the Equality Act? Could you expand a little more on how and why you think the Equality Act should be amended to better improve protections for freelance and self-employed musicians?

Vick Bain: Because there is no recourse for someone who does not have an employment contract, you are outside the scope of the Equality Act. You can get some legal advice, but there is nothing you can do. That is it. The freelance music workforce really needs some protection or clarification on what sort of working contracts exactly would have that protection.

Q89 Elliot Colburn: Thank you. That is really, really helpful. Do you think that the Independent Standards Authority will be an effective way to tackle misconduct? Is it a step in the right direction? Is it not enough? What are your thoughts on that?

Vick Bain: I have concerns about it. I have been told about its development and I understand that the music industry wants to have something, or “This organisation is going to solve harassment and discrimination in the music industry, great.” But it concerns me in a few ways, one of which is that it might interfere with someone's time period in which they can get legal advice and start proceedings. It seems to be replicating, or want to replicate, some of the services that existing membership organisations and unions are already providing.

It also seems to me that it might be a conflict of interest that the music industry is funding an organisation that would somehow investigate itself. I understand it has no proposed regulatory powers and, therefore, what powers will it have? I believe the proposal is it can do investigations and make some recommendations, and then the music company or organisation involved can go, “Well, I am going to ignore them.”

Q90 Elliot Colburn: Without any teeth. From statute, it is almost words.

Vick Bain: Exactly. We already have the Equality and Human Rights Commission, so it seems to me that we are treading on some territory that maybe has not been thought through properly.

Q91 Elliot Colburn: Yes. I saw lots of nodding from the rest of the panel. Did anyone on the rest of the panel want to come in on that issue about the Independent Standards Authority and whether or not it would be useful at all?

Vanessa Threadgold: From my perspective, you will see similar issues in that people will still be scared to report because of losing work. That is the biggest threat. As Vick was saying, we might be replicating things



that are not working. We might need to look at things that are new and really look at the people who are doing the work.

There are some amazing organisations doing great work in these areas, and unfortunately, a lot of this is a societal issue. It is not just within the music industry, it is just that the music industry is primed for it to be worse. As Vick says, it is potentially not the overall best solution if it is just a recommendation. There is not much teeth there, and people are not going to do anything.

Q92 Elliot Colburn: Yes. Vanessa, you raise a good point about the organisations that are already doing work in this space. Would you envisage a way where industry and the Government can better support the organisations that are already existing and doing work, and how would that look? What do you think support would look like in order to bolster the work that those organisations are doing?

Vanessa Threadgold: I like to be realistic and pragmatic in things. I appreciate funding is always a difficult topic; we have seen a lot with the Arts Council and how the funding has been spread and levelling up has happened recently.

We need to make it a priority to impact women and the safety of people within the music industry—actually creating a pot of funding as a priority—and then the typical role of people tendering that funding and putting forward proposals and saying, “We can do this work, these are the examples of the work we have done,” and being able to do this at a more local level and impact people directly and holistically.

Nadia Khan: I agree.

Q93 Elliot Colburn: Nadia, I saw a lot of nodding there. Did you want to come in on that too?

Nadia Khan: Yes. I was just agreeing with what Vanessa was saying and something Vanessa touched on earlier about the structures of funding. Again, as Women in CTRL, I have self-funded everything to date because the funding avenues that are open require me to do a women's album or a writing camp or a day away, and we want to do real work. We are wanting to do research that is actually making tangible change in the industry. I have done campaigning at Women in CTRL, and we have released the Seat At The Table report. I am now working with organisations and women and actively running campaigns to get them elected. I have been successful in every campaign that I have run so far, but I am putting my spare time into this.

I run my own business, so I do not want to do a vanity project, “Let us get some women together and do an album.” I work with women artists already and we already do that stuff. Maybe you would all agree that the way the funding is set up is challenging. We do not want to make up these projects to apply for a little pot of money and then go back and say what we have done when we are all really wanting to make structural



change, real tangible change that is going to really benefit the industry, which we all have the knowledge and passion to do.

Melinda Kelly: I absolutely agree with that. I mentioned before that we fund ourselves with t-shirt sales; we are an all-volunteer organisation. I put so much of my own money into what we do in protecting people that come to live music, which is a multi-million, if not billion-pound industry.

The Government are leaving some money on the table for itself in the form of taxes by not supporting the arts this way and not providing the funding. If more women feel safe to come to shows, then they will come to shows and they will spend money and the economy goes that way. With more funding and more support for women in the arts and in music, we could. People are missing a trick and leaving money on the table by not supporting us.

Q94 **Elliot Colburn:** That is really helpful. Thank you for that. I can probably guess the answer to this, Vanessa, but in promoting the charter for change, what sort of reaction do you get from the industry? How helpful do you find them when you are trying to engage with the industry to promote that?

Vanessa Threadgold: It really varies so wildly. With larger organisations, we typically get a very positive reaction, and often they will be working on things themselves in the background to try to make their workplace environments better and safer. They have more structure to them and are typically more financially viable.

When we are looking at studios and spaces that are not as financially viable, they are really worried about their clientele and how they are going to react to it. For instance, out of the 700 studios we contacted in the last month, 340 of them—50%—had already closed since last year. They are really struggling financially, so they do not want to put off their clientele, and if people are coming into the industry expecting a casual space, expecting to be able to do whatever they want in these venues, they do not want to put those people off.

Q95 **Elliot Colburn:** Thank you. One last question to all of you. It seems as if there has been a lot of grassroots organisations and voluntary organisations trying to effect change for a very long time, and yet the testimony we have had has been quite bleak, and the situation is quite bleak. Has the time passed for the industry to try to sort this issue out without any formal direction, whether that be new legislation, new rules and regulations, a new regulator, etc. Do you think the time has passed for the industry to sort this out on their own, and it is time for something with a bit more teeth? I may start with Vanessa and work down the panel.

Vanessa Threadgold: I would like it to not be the case that legislation potentially needs to be put forward, but I do not know how realistic that is. There will be more movement towards it with things like this



happening because people do like the positive PR of it, but a lot of the time the reality is lip service and positive PR with nothing going further underneath the curtain. It is a difficult question to answer.

Elliot Colburn: Thank you. That is really helpful. Nadia.

Nadia Khan: I touched on this a little bit earlier on, but I do not think that the industry is capable, or has shown to be willing, to solve the problems that are there at the minute. As I said before, it is not in one area; it is across the whole industry. When we do reporting, we might focus on a specific area doing some data and research. It is difficult to have conversations because no one wants to take accountability and we are not trying to blame; we are trying to make improvements. Unless there is a collective effort from the industry to put the time and investment in, then no, it will need to come from outside sources.

Melinda Kelly: From my perspective, sexual harassment and sexual violence is already illegal. In respect of legislation, I too would hope there does not need to be Government intervention. Maybe that is a bit naive of me, but it would be better if all of us here, who have this expertise, had the ability. The Government could help us influence the music industry, both front and back of house, rather than more regulations within an industry that is already on its knees trying to recover from the pandemic.

Elliot Colburn: Finally, Vick, to you.

Vick Bain: I am all for greater amounts of regulation and strengthening the requirement to get organisations to behave. Having to report the pay gaps has been brilliant because it has shone a light on what is really going on, and people can then make an informed judgment. The PR statements that this organisation puts out, how does that differ from how well women are doing in those organisations?

I would definitely like to see some expansion of that to cover organisations which are smaller. It is a problem in music because most businesses are micro-businesses, but it would not be too onerous to do a pay gap report, even if you had 20 staff. I would definitely like to see a lot more regulation because then people are much more likely to comply.

Q96 **Chair:** I am not sure whether this is a question or a statement. Vanessa, you said something much earlier in this session about how the music industry has not had its MeToo moment. I guess the question is, how can we empower women to speak up?

The second part—which definitely is a statement—can I just formally thank all of you for coming before I have closed the meeting? We really struggle to get women to come forward and speak up, so I know that it takes courage and bravery. Thank you for being here this afternoon. It has made a big difference to us to be able to hear from you. Is there anything more that can be done to empower women to be brave enough



to come forward?

Vanessa Threadgold: It is really difficult. It is difficult to disclose regardless of whether you are in the music industry or not, but Raye released an album this week after leaving a major label quite publicly a couple of years ago. On the album "My 21st Century Blues", there is a song called "Ice Cream Man" which talks very openly about an experience that she has had. People like Raye—and hopefully she will get to number one with this album—being brave enough to speak about those issues and being so public-facing, those are the sorts of things that that could help.

Chair: Thank you. Kim has a final question for you now.

Q97 **Kim Johnson:** I meant to ask the question earlier, and I am sorry, but it goes back to music and lyrics and misogyny. There is an assertion that black music and genres get over-scrutinised, and I just wanted to know whether you thought that that was the case and what should be done about it.

Melinda Kelly: Yes, definitely.

Vick Bain: My understanding of the research is that it is across pop music in general, and, as we discussed earlier, even in folk and classical opera. A woman is murdered in just about every opera I have ever seen. It is a problem across the board, and you are right that black music genres have faced more scrutiny.

Q98 **Kim Johnson:** Thank you. Last question to you, Nadia. Your report resulted in more black women sitting on boards, and that is a great step. I wanted to know whether you thought that was going to have an impact going forward in terms of encouraging more women to come forward and be brave, because that is what it is about, unfortunately, having the bravery to stand up and put your head over the parapet to call out these terrible acts.

Nadia Khan: Yes, unfortunately, it is a very similar conversation with every woman when I talk to them about going forward for a board position. They will go to the website and see the make-up of the board—we call it "male, pale and stale"—and it is really off-putting to see that kind of board looking back at you. You feel, "How do I fit in there? Will I be listened to?" You already have to overcome these barriers.

We talk a lot about women in the industry lacking confidence or having imposter syndrome, whereas I see it as the imposter syndrome is created by the systems where you do not feel welcome to go into those rooms. A lot of the work with every single woman that I have ever spoken to and convinced to go forward for a board has been an hour or two hours of conversation to explain why they should go for it. It is challenging and it is difficult. When you are doing this kind of work, movement is really slow at those top levels as well.



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We had a conversation when I was putting the report out, and you said you have to keep on every year. In the report, out of 12 CEOs, there were three women that were CEOs at the time, but if one woman leaves, that number reduces drastically. It is ongoing work and it is very challenging for a woman to step forward into those roles and be the first or the only woman.

Vick Bain: Can I just say, when women do get in these very senior positions, they do not stay in those positions as long as the men do. That is another problem as well; it is not just about promoting, it is about retaining and ensuring that they can succeed in those roles.

Kim Johnson: Thank you, panel, for your great responses to our questions today. Thank you very much.

Chair: If there is anything you wanted to add in writing, please do. If there is anything you think we have failed to ask you or you suddenly remember, then please do feed it in afterwards. We are very pleased to receive it. Thank you very much for your evidence.