

# Amount of sexual abuse in UK theatre 'is extraordinary'

By Daniel Thomas

THERE is an "extraordinary" amount of sexual harassment in UK theatre, the artistic director of the Royal Court Theatre has warned, after she received hundreds of stories of abuse from industry professionals, some of them including prominent working actors.

Vicky Featherstone had called on the industry to share its tales of harassment anonymously in the wake of the Harvey Weinstein scandal. She said many had been emboldened after scores of famous film actresses went public with complaints of sexual assault and harassment against the US movie mogul. Ms Featherstone said: "I



Vicky Featherstone had called on the theatre industry to share experiences of sexual harassment

think 'rife' is a problematic word to use, but there are an extraordinary amount of stories of sexual abuse, both systematically and personally within theatre.

"It is hugely problematic but we are not the only industry to suffer – it's a huge problem across the whole of society." According to the Royal Court, 150 stories have been submitted in the last 10 days alone. The theatre, which has the backing of 30 other organisations including the National Theatre, the Royal Shakespeare Company and the Young Vic, plans to publish a draft code of best practice next week.

This could include tips such as never meeting a powerful person for the first time out of working hours or at their homes, Ms Featherstone suggested.

Industry professionals might also be advised not to drink at such meetings.