

Joint statement of UK brewers, 13 Oct 2021

We are aware of the conduct at Mikkeller, as has been reported, and their failure to take sufficient action in relation to a number of incidents of harassment and employee mistreatment over the past number of years.

It is clear that there are problems within the industry, and not only with Mikkeller; and that significant action needs to be taken both to address specifically what has happened, and to change the culture going forward.

As a group of invited brewers from the UK, we have been meeting over the past few days to decide what approach to take ourselves. We do not believe that pulling out of the festival will bring about the kind of industry we want to be part of, nor will it serve the many festival attendees who have travelled far and paid money to enjoy celebrating together with our beer.

More than simply condemning Mikkeller, or distancing ourselves from the festival, we need to do the serious work of addressing the culture we are in, how we got here, and how we can create a safer and more inclusive environment for everyone working in the industry.

We do not believe that people who have been on the receiving end of harassment, discrimination or bullying should have to resort to social media just to be heard; nor do we believe that social media is a productive space for the kind of action that is necessary to address their concerns, or to transform the industry moving forward. We cannot sit on the sidelines. We must be active in making changes and we feel the best place to do this is in the room.

Therefore, as a group of united brewers from the UK we are still planning to attend this year's festival, with the following clear conditions:

1. We will be holding a meeting, over the festival weekend but independent of it, for brewers and invited guests, including representatives of those who have been at the receiving end of misconduct in the industry more widely, to begin a vital and overdue process of coming up with concrete proposals for (a) addressing the incidents that have taken place to date; and (b) transforming the culture of the industry moving forward, towards full & proper inclusion.
2. We will expect Mikkeller to attend this meeting. This is a condition of our attendance at the festival.
3. The result will not simply be a statement of intent, but a series of practical proposals which we commit ourselves to taking forward, and which will include clear mechanisms for the reporting of harassment and discrimination, and the drawing up of a code of conduct for the industry which sets clear obligations on breweries moving forward. We are aware of initiatives set up to this end in the US - it is time we create this in Europe.
4. We are reaching out to other invited breweries to be part of this process. All breweries are invited to this meeting, including those who have decided not to pour at the festival.

We have all been far apart for a long time and it is our belief that, as the pandemic eases, we have the opportunity to come together again, not to avoid or shirk difficult questions, but to address them. It is, indeed, in precisely that spirit that we must act to bring about change, to the benefit of those who love beer and those who love to make it.

Boundary Brewing	Northern Monk
Burnt Mill Brewery	Track Brewing
DEYA Brewing	Verdant Brewing
North Brewing Co	Wylam Brewery