

# Gender Balance Network – Panel Discussion

25<sup>th</sup> September 12-1pm

Panel: Katie Matthews-Male, Rob Harrison, Blathnaid Duffy and Steve Norris

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The Gender Balance Network hosted their first face-to-face event with a panel who voiced their thoughts across several hot topics surrounding Gender Balance across the society and the surveying industry.

## ***1. Challenges women face causing them to leave the profession at an earlier age than their male counterparts and what can be done to influence having more senior women in leading roles***

- Nursery fees are expensive, working from home reduces this cost as there isn't a need for breakfast clubs
- Women struggle to get back into professional roles post maternity leave, daytime events and the introduction of more part-time roles would help this
- Women form the primary care giver for parents which contributes towards this gap

## ***2. Part time working is least common for women returning to work after maternity when they hold Director level positions. Men are more likely to consider as they approach retirement. How can a senior role be managed on a part-time basis?***

- Females have children at a later age so are more likely to be at a director role, harder to have work life balance with demands of the job
- Societal culture needs to change e.g. nursery by default contact the mother
- Reduce the stigma of part-time working which we likely have unconscious bias about, it's not just parents who would like to work part-time
- Increase skills for females who may not face clients

## ***3. Changes that can be made to increase the number of people who take Shared Parental Leave which in the UK stands at only 7%***

- An education piece is needed to promote the policy and overall review of policies
- Societal culture needs to change as in other countries it is the norm for the mother and father to take equal shares of parental leave

## ***4. How to attract more females into the industry***

- Accountability needs to be placed on both line managers to support employee development, but on the individuals to have a 5-year plan and vocalise regularly their development needs
- Apprenticeships include one of many pathways to get into the industry

## ***5. Challenges around Gender Balance that the industry and LSH are facing***

- Support for maternity returners through promotion of KIT days
- Increase training which LSH makes available, important all take up on the opportunities there!

