

Stewarding

Everything you might want to know about stewarding events, actions, marches.

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What's it like being a Steward?



'I've been a steward for XR on a few rebellions, and absolutely love it - the stewards are a really welcoming team and its really fun. When I first started stewarding, I was REALLY nervous, but it's easy to get the hang of, the other stewards look after you and there is lots of guidance and training.'

Nic, XR Steward

I started stewarding in 2020 when I found I was sometimes the only person from my Local Group at a protest. I've made new friends from all over and felt part of a supportive group as well as feeling useful. I had some previous local experience which was helpful but there are plenty of training sessions and we usually buddy up.

Claire, XR Steward

What does it involve



Stewards : With a large event we need a LOT of stewards! - as a minimum 1 Steward per 100 attendees. Even small local events benefit from a few stewards. No experience needed - training provided.

Stewards help to ensure all attendees at an event are safe. On a march this would include keeping people away from traffic, supporting road closures and keeping the march together. At a static event, this would include answering questions from the public or attendees, pointing people in the right direction, or helping them find others. We give full training (online and at the event) and new stewards are buddied up with experienced ones (we usually aim to steward in pairs).

What next



So I want to be a Steward, what next?

Online Stewarding Training

Signup to be a Steward on XR Action Network

So I want to be a Steward, what next?

Join the Telegram Chat

Join one or both the Telegram chats listed here: [Steward Communications](#)

Please don't be put off if you don't use Telegram though - you can still volunteer in person by just turning up on the day and asking for the Lead Steward (although it will be much easier to know what's planned if you [Signup to be a Steward on XR Action Network](#) beforehand.

Complete the Recruitment Form

For large scale events we organise rotas to share the workload. Information on these will be published in advance via our email newsletter and on the Telegram chats. [Signup to be a Steward on XR Action Network](#) with your details, especially if you want to be verified as a potential Lead Steward.

Join a Training Session

[Register for an online training session, or watch a video recording](#)

Alternatively, you will be able to attend a face to face training during events, typically 1 hour before shifts start.

[Signup to be a Steward on XR Action Network](#)

Steward Communications

Contact Us

You can reach the Stewarding Team at Stewarding@extinctionrebellion.uk

How do we keep in touch with fellow Stewards

Before, during and after the events we use several chats:

Big Stewards Chat: A Telegram chat for all XR Steward Volunteers. Chat, queries & call-outs

London Stewards: A Telegram chat for Stewards living in London. Chat, queries & call-outs

We also use more secure Signal communications for Lead Stewards. You will need to be verified by someone from a XR Team or Supporter Organisation to be added to these.

Hand Signals

These Signals are used to communicate with attendees at an event or action



This signal is used to communicate (silently) with other stewards (try and remember to always be looking round and watching your stewarding colleagues to make sure you keep in contact)



Indication that a Steward wants assistance, (but doesn't want to draw attention)

Mic Check: when y
crowd repeats this



Mic Check
Don't assume
crowd will
understand
Demo before
needed

n repeat "Mic Check, Mic check", the
our short message, the crowd repeats

it. Then loop again

[Signup to be a Steward on XR Action Network](#)

Mic Check



What is Mic Check?

It is a method to communicate with a large crowd without a PA system or megaphones.

How does it work?

If you hear someone shouting "MIC CHECK", also say "mic check" loudly, until everyone is quiet (or you can use the raised hand gesture to call for silence).

Then a person will ask a question or give direction. Everyone will call and respond (copy) so that a large crowd can hear. The message should be repeated until it reaches the edges of the group.

So if I said very slowly and clearly "we need to move from this site to site B, please follow the stewards" you would say in unison "we need to move from this site to site B, please follow the stewards" And the person next to you would say "we need to move from this site to site B, please follow the stewards"

It's not guaranteed stewards will always need to use mic checks, but it's a really useful tool to manage XR protest crowds [] (and very cool when it happens as you realise it's a well oiled, connective collaborative collective - We are all crew [])

Tips to make the technique effective

Speak in short sentences or phrases (the people around you need to hear the sentence, remember it and then repeat it).

Leave gaps between sentences so that the message can ripple out (don't speak the next sentence until you cannot hear the repeats in the crowd - this will tell you the message has spread far enough away)

If you had planned to give a speech, just go over the top key points (probably a maximum of 5 sentences)

Example

Greta giving an example of the Mic Check in 2018 Declaration of Rebellion

Stewarding Training

We have a number of Zoom sessions where we will go through various aspects of Stewarding and give you a chance to ask questions. We recommend all Stewards attend Stewards General Training, or a face to face session at an event.

We aim to run online training monthly and more frequently in the run up to big events

[Signup to be a Steward on XR Action Network](#) to hear about these sessions or keep an eye on the [Movement Broadcast on Telegram](#).

Training- online

21 Oct 7-8pm [Register for General Stewarding Training](#)

[General Stewards Training Video](#) General Stewarding Training - 30min

[General Stewards Briefing Video](#) Short 4min video of stewarding tips

We have also run the sessions listed below previously, and can organise again if they are needed - [contact us for details](#):

- Accessibility & Inclusion for Stewards
- Protest Liaison for Stewards
- Outreach for Stewards
- De escalation for Stewards
- How to recce and plan a March
- Roadtaking

[Training materials](#), Powerpoint slide decks etc. are available if you want to run your own training sessions.

Training: Face to Face

We usually run face to face training sessions during large events, typically 1 hour before shifts start.

Top Tips Sheet


Helpful sheet if you just want to print one page, export [this one](#) as a PDF

Lead Steward Training

Lead Stewards are welcome to join any of the training sessions above and we can always add on a section at the end to cover Lead topics (its a few extra slides)

Further Training

These optional additional training modules will enhance your skills and confidence when Stewarding:

- Notes on [talking to the police](#)
- [Counter Terrorism Training - spotting threats](#)
- [Deescalation Training](#) (Login required)
- [CPR Training](#) 
- [Street Speakers](#) (short talks you might be interested in delivering to parts of the crowd)
- [Witnessing an arrest](#)
- [Witnessing a stop and search](#)
- [Street Outreach Skills Training](#)
- [Crowd Safety and Crowd Risk Analysis \(crowd density tech paper\)](#)

[Signup to be a Steward on XR Action Network](#)

What to bring with you when Stewarding

Things to check before you arrive for your shift

- Have I installed and checked the communications App on my phone? [Telegram](#) or [Signal](#)
- Have I joined the specific Telegram or Signal chat for the day (details will be emailed when you signup to Steward)
- Have I installed and opened the [What3Words App](#) on my phone?
- Do I know what time and where Stewards are meeting?

What to bring with you

- Comfortable Shoes
- Clothing Layers
- An all weather hat
- Water bottle
- Food container and utensils
- Snacks
- A-Z Paper map (available cheaply on ebay)
- Notepad & Pencil
- Earplugs (Rhythms can be very loud if you are stewarding near them)
- Phone
- Power bank for your phone (charging points are hard to find)
- Umbrella (avoid large umbrellas but small foldable ones can be useful for many reasons)
- Your Pink High-Viz if you already have one
- A badge (or stick on labels and Sharpie pen) to write your name on
- A small bag, or better still a small rucksack to hold supplies
- The site map or march route (if published in advance)
- Suncream

Where to store stuff

There is often nowhere secure to store anything during events. If you have small items, it's best to carry them with you. Alternatively, there are several companies that have many sites across London where you can store a bag for 24hrs (for a fee). If there are several of you together, try packing everything into one bag - you only pay once.

We are not affiliated to any of these sites and don't recommend any particular company:

Radical Storage

Stasher

Bounce

If you know of others, please let us know [via email](#).

Signup to be a Steward on XR Action Network

Stewarding Training Materials

The material on this page is for those planning to train others as Stewards. These training slide packs are available for you to adapt as required for your own training sessions. Materials are constantly being developed and improved so please ensure you download the latest version before use.

If you find any broken links, or have edits or suggestions, please contact

Stewarding@extinctionrebellion.uk

Stewarding Training Sessions

If you are looking to simply be trained then see [Stewarding Training](#) for a listing of available sessions to book, or watch.

Stewarding Training Materials

Note these Powerpoint presentation should be downloaded and shown using PowerPoint if animations and embedded videos are to work.

[Powerpoint Slides for General Steward Training \(Google Drive\)](#)

[Powerpoint Slides for General Steward Training - Restore Nature Now version \(Google Drive\)](#)

[Powerpoint Slides for Stewarding a March Training \(Google Drive\)](#)

[Powerpoint Slides for Roadtaking Training \(Google Drive\)](#)

[Video of Blue Light response during Unite to Survive march, Bath Oct 2023](#)

Zoom Images

[Zoom Video Background](#)

[Zoom meeting Banner](#) Used when a session requires registration

[Zoom meeting Logo](#) Used when a session requires registration

[Signup to be a Steward on XR Action Network](#)

Planning & Stewarding a March



Preparation

Training is available on this topic see [Stewarding Training](#).

Strong preparation is absolutely key to pulling off an effective march. And the bigger the march will be, the more key preparation will be to success.

These are the elements you should consider when planning a march.

1. What is the purpose of the march? This will help you plan the route, and decide what elements you want to include.

2. Plan the route. Recce at similar time of day and day of the week as the march is planned to take place on. Take photos of junctions so that roadtake teams can plan. Consider alternatives in case you need to shorten or lengthen the route depending on numbers. In general we march in the same direction as traffic.
3. Document the route - Google MyMaps is ideal as it allows a team to edit, add notes for stages and then share their final route plan.
4. **Notify the police:** The law states 6 days in advance and you need to give name of organiser. You do **not** need permission from the police, just evidence you have notified them (which you will get by email receipt). In almost all cases it makes sense to notify the police, marches are usually pitched as 'family friendly' parts of a protest, the police will sometimes assist with road closures. We would recommend contacting our **XR Protest Liaison team** for advice, they will be happy to use their details on the notification forms.
5. Plan main banners, roadtake banners, other flags and visuals. Give as much notice as possible to the **creative teams** if new banners are required.
6. Will **Rhythms** (samba) or other bands be involved, do they have enough notice?
7. Where will the march assemble? Large open spaces are best as they allows crowds to assemble easily in sequence.
8. How will the march disperse at the end of the route, or is there another event following the march, that takes place at a specific time?

Media & Messaging

1. How will the march be publicised?
2. Create visuals and copy for broadcast channels, Facebook, press releases etc.

Roles Involved

Chances are you will need a support team to help your march run smoothly. [Here is a list of roles](#) often required on actions.

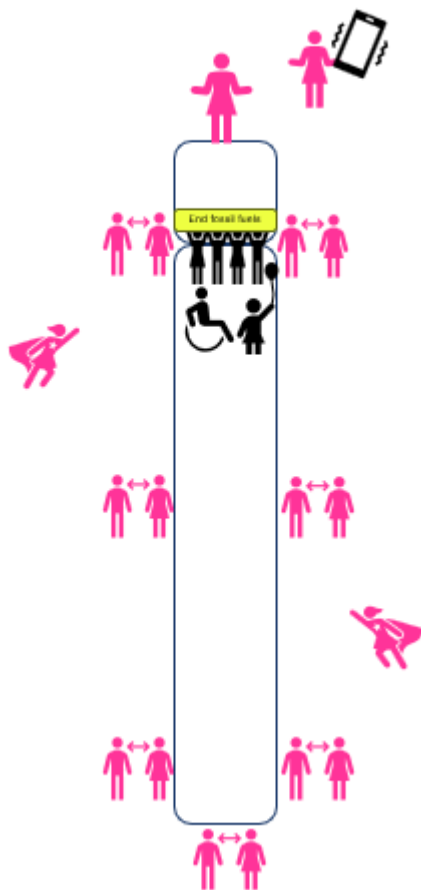
Note: Not every march will have all of these roles and some of them may be combined.

The day of the March

1. Recce the route again. Roadworks or other unplanned barriers have been known to occur overnight.
2. Check you have all the expected banners/flags/etc.
3. Ensure you have enough people recruited for roadtaking, and that they are trained and confident? If they need a quick recap, make sure this happens.
4. Ensure Stewards present and briefed on the march route.
5. Assuming the march is pre-liased, have Protest Liaison connecte dto Police Liasion?

Starting the March

- Assemble the march block(s)
 1. Front March Leader / Point Steward (who will be walking backwards)
 2. Empty space (area kept clear for photographers to get clear shots of front banner)
 3. Main Banner
 4. Slowest marchers (ideally you want these near the front of a march to set the pace, however they may not want to be there, may not like the noise from Drummers, etc.)
 5. Body of march
 6. Samba
 7. Body of march
 8. Samba
 9. Tail of March
- When march coordinator is happy, whatever signal has been agreed beforehand is given to start. This will usually be the Front March Leader signalling to the front banner holders to move forwards via hand gestures.



Progressing the March

- March Speed / Gaps

- Gaps are inevitable, you just want to avoid them getting too big as traffic will then try and get through.
- Stopping and restarting a march is difficult, better to slow the front right down to wait for gaps to close.
- Communications from stewards along the march length is critical to judge appropriate march speed - slower is better.
- To communicate with Rhythms/Samba contact them via the Samba Shepherd (with a lamb on a stick), or speak to the whistler's supporter (usually walking backwards alongside the whistler)
- Roadtaking
 - See separate **Training** for Road Take crew.
 - Usually this crew will be recruited on the day supplemented by Banner Holders and some Stewards to guide them.
- Speeches enroute
 - Avoid if at all possible as people will stop to listen and this will create gaps.
 - One solution is to pause the whole march but only a small section near the PA will be able to hear any speeches.

Photos of Marches

Video of a large Biodiversity march April 2023



Signup to be a Steward on XR Action Network

On the day - 12 Stewarding Tips

If you're new to Stewarding, why not print this page of top tips and bring it with you to your first action?

Stewards on a protest are welcomed, and we want to be professional too.

Wear hi-vis, comfortable shoes, clothing in layers & all-weather hat (no umbrellas) Bring sunscreen, electricians tape, earplugs, water, pen & paper, phone. Food, medication, anything you may need.

in a backpack to keep both hands free & give the distinctive hump under the tabard. see [What to bring with you when Stewarding](#) for a complete list

1. Stewards' primary task is to keep protesters and passers by safe (eg from traffic)
2. Don't talk to the police or security, never repeat or text anything you might hear them say, nor rumours.
3. If asked (e.g. how long, what else): you don't know, you are here to keep people safe, you are not part of the protest.
4. Stay calm, don't get into arguments, take a deep breath and de-escalate.
5. To communicate quickly to a crowd, use [Mic check](#) e.g. to get people to sit down or leave.
6. Stewards work in pairs - e.g. if there is an accident, one stays with the injured, the other gets help.
7. Ask the lead steward anything you don't know, but find out where the nearest toilets are yourself.
8. Do not point or gesture at people who might be helping at the protest - you may be being filmed so you don't want to be identifying people.
9. Safeguarding: stay in pairs, do not give unclaimed children to random people, leave reuniting to the authorities.
10. On a march slow the front to the slowest participant, don't allow gaps to widen, send banner pairs to hold intersections.
11. On a static protest keep a path clear on the pavement for passers by and keep protesters off the road unless it is closed to traffic.
12. Ask and suggest, don't order: people don't have to obey you.

Watch the 4min video of these tips [Stewards Briefing Video](#)

Signup to be a Steward on XR Action Network