

Communicating with the police

It is acknowledged and understood that the issue of talking to the police at all is a sensitive one, not least because of the findings in many reports (e.g. The Casey Review) that police forces are institutionally racist and misogynistic. It is recognised that people of colour, other communities racialised as non-white, and other marginalised groups have suffered, and continue to suffer, from over-policing, and that their interactions with the police are inherently more risky than for those racialised as white. Through experience, we have found that liaison with police prior to an outreach action has resulted in a reduced police presence and a more welcoming environment for outreach to marginalised groups.

In these contexts, we believe that some forms of protest benefit from communicating with the police and/or Local Authorities in advance, whereas in other cases the protest will be more effective if the authorities are not notified in advance but liaised with once the action is in place.

The purpose of XR Protest Liaison is to help optimise the effectiveness of a protest action and to prioritise the safety of all involved. To that end we have developed channels of communication with the police. This enables us to contact the right people at the appropriate time, depending on the nature of the protest. It is important that when we speak to police they understand that what we say is true to the best of our knowledge at the time. It is equally important that the police know and accept that we will withhold information in circumstances when disclosure would hinder the effectiveness of an action.

If your Action team or Local Group would like help and support in communicating with the local police or site security please contact us protestliaison@extinctionrebellion.uk
