

# What's involved in being Wellbeing Crew?

These are guidelines for what to expect once you have signed up as an Action Wellbeing Supporter. It can also serve as a set of guidelines for Wellbeing coordinators.

## Before the Action

Once you have signed up for Action Wellbeing role you will be contacted by an Action Wellbeing Coordinator who will be able to link you up with other Action Wellbeing Supporters you will be working with. We recommend choosing an Anchor at this point to help build a support network in preparation for the action and continuing long after. An **Anchor** is a point of stability during the tumult of an action and offers check-ins as needed by rebels on the ground. They might be someone who can't come to the action or wants to support from a distance, thus conserving their energies especially for pre- and post-action support.

There will be opportunities for training and ongoing communications so by the time we are on the street we feel prepared, supported and connected.

In this pre-action period we will also arrange a [debrief](#) for 1 - 2 weeks after the action. There will be a named person, possibly a Wellbeing Anchor who will make sure this happens. It would be lovely if it can be face to face but of course this is not always possible and when it isn't zoom calls will be arranged.

### Preparation:

Actions can be stressful situations to enter into and we may not always know what's going to happen ahead of time. Some questions we might ask ourselves and those around us may be:

- What are my motivations for doing this?
- Do my values align with my motivations?
- What do I need to feel nourished?
- How will I know when I need to take a rest?

It is also a good idea to use the [Pre-action and arrest preparation guidelines](#).

### Contact:

You will be added to a group chat for the for the action, which will allow effective communication on the day. Apps used are SIGNAL, WHATSAPP or TELEGRAM. If you don't have a smart phone, ensure you have the contact number for the Wellbeing Team Coordinator.

## Meeting up:

The Wellbeing Team Coordinator will be in touch with you the day before to inform you of the meeting point and time.

# On the day...

## What to bring:

- A mobile phone/charger/ battery pack
- Pen & paper
- Food & drink for yourself
- A good book/source of entertainment, in case you do some arrestee support and have to wait a while at the police station
- Enough money to pay for a taxi/food/drinks for arrestees (just in case!)
- Weather appropriate wear: Warm & waterproof clothing, an umbrella, suncream.

## What to wear:

Prioritise being comfortable, warm and dry. If you wish to, go smart casual - this may help our portrayal in the media and support the image of an inclusive movement. Keep your XR banners and clothing for when you arrive, it's important that we don't stand out too much when travelling to the actions.

## Wellbeing packs:

Each pair will be given a backpack that will have useful things, e.g snacks, water and survival blankets in it. You will also be given bust cards, which have solicitors number on them.

## Being identifiable:

We will all wear blue high-viz tabbards to be identifiable as the wellbeing team. The first aiders will have green first aid tabbards on.

## Meeting up:

When we meet up for we will:

- Do a grounding exercise
- Have a check in - How am I feeling? Hopes/fears?
- The coordinator will brief the team on any information they have regarding the action.

- Buddy up.
- Share important contacts and write solicitors number somewhere on yourself.
- Agree on a point to meet after the action for a debrief. This could be at the wellbeing hub if there is one, or another easily accessible safe and calm space such as nearby park or cafe.

## Buddying up:

You will have a buddy, who you will stay with or know the exact whereabouts of at all times during the action. If you have been involved in the planning and preparation you will hopefully already have a buddy but if not it will be arranged during the morning briefing. Action Wellbeing Supporters help to keep energy levels high, keep an eye on vulnerable participants, generally ensuring the physical and emotional wellbeing of anybody who is taking part in the action.

There will be time for any questions. Then we will head to where the actions are happening with our buddies.

## During the Action

At the action there will be:

### Affinity Groups:

Some of the people taking action will be organised into affinity groups (small groups of people who know each other well enough to take direct action together). Some affinity groups will have a wellbeing coordinator. You and your buddy will be there to provide extra support, encouragement and guidance to these wellbeing coordinators.

### There will also be:

Mostly, those who are not part of an affinity group and members of the public who have just joined. It is the role of the wellbeing supporter to keep an eye on the wellbeing of everyone at the action.

## What you should do as an Action Wellbeing Supporter:

- Checking in with the people taking action (and their wellbeing coordinator if they have one) to see if they need anything.
- Keeping an eye out on arrests and taking note of the arresting officer, and the police station they are being taken to - especially if there are no Legal Observers present. See [Witnessing an arrest notes](#).
- Keeping an eye out for anyone injured, distressed or overwhelmed, making sure no one is left on their own.
- Thanking and cheering (if it feels appropriate) arrestees when they are taken off to the police van. Or if they are alone accompanying them to the van and being the last smiling and supportive face they see before they are taken away.

- Checking in with strangers, especially if they are alone, and seeing how they are doing. A good question you can ask is 'What brought you here today?' (Remember some people may be cautious of giving their name if police are around.) See if they are planning on being arrested and if so...
- Checking-in with arrestables
 

Before and during an action, check-in with people and see if they are planning to be arrested. If they are then offer to explore the following with them - explain that this is not to deter them, but it is to make sure they are fully prepared to maintain their wellbeing through the criminal justice system:

  - Reasons & Motivations
 

"How did you decide that you want to be arrestable?"
  - Anxiety/Fears/Concerns/Boundaries
 

"Do you have any fears or concerns about being arrested?"

"Do you have any concern that any of your traits/qualities may impact your experience at an action or during arrest (e.g. ethnicity, class, disability, sexual orientation)"
  - Impact
 

"What impact do you think this will have on you and your family/friends?"

"What do you think is the worst case scenario?"
  - Support & Preparation
 

"How have you prepared yourself for today?" e.g., attended NVDA, know your rights, informed family) but also

"What is your support network like?" e.g. part of an affinity group, police station support, has an anchor at home, has a buddy with them at the action.
  - Embedded
 

"How does today, including any arrests, court appearances etc. link in with the rest of your life, your plans, your values?" - linking back to the motivation at the beginning.

Help the rebel to return to a positive place after what could be difficult questions.

## In case of...

- Minor injuries - call over a first aider (in a green hi-vis)
- Serious injuries - call an ambulance
- Someone feeling overwhelmed/seems distressed - take aside to sit down, offer water/reassurance/to call a friend/family if needed
- Someone feeling unwell and needing to leave the action - ensure they have assistance/company- either a friend or trusted wellbeing person, do NOT send them off with someone unknown to them, or on their own.
- Someone taking direct action intoxicated or behaving in a way that doesn't adhere to XR's principles and values/the action consensus eg: Being verbally or physically violent - IF you feel comfortable doing so let the person know that we are a non violent movement with a set of principles & values guiding our work that we ask everyone on site to agree to. Have someone with you when you do this for support. You can also call on the support of a de-

escalator (white hi-vis) or your co-ordinator.

## After the Action:

### Check out:

We will gather again immediately after the action to check out, and handover if another team is coming on shift. This serves as a mini debrief, but is not an alternative to a full debrief.

Things to think about during check out:

- How am I feeling now?
- What went well?
- Do I have any concerns?
- What do I need right now or what will I do later to nourish myself.

Arrange to check in with your buddy over the next few days and attend the debrief (which will have already been arranged for 1-2 weeks after the action).

### Welcome home gathering:

Gather with your affinity group or others you were in action with to connect, share stories and celebrate.

### Debrief:

Debriefs are an important part of post action care and can often be forgotten about in the business of an action. That is why we recommend that all debriefs are booked in before the action starts.

Some of the main reasons for debriefing are:

- Learning and improving
- Emotional processing
- Preventing 'Burn-Out'
- Staying connected

Take a look at the [Debrief Template](#). This can be adapted and simplified. Pick the bits that work for you.

After this debrief we recommend keeping an eye out for or organising [Ongoing Talking Circles/Reflective Spaces](#) to help stay connected.

---