

Weaving Citizen's Assembly Messaging into Actions

It's easier to talk about our central demand when we're doing an action or outreach specifically about Citizens' Assemblies.

But it's important that we talk about our central demand in as many of our actions as possible!

We can talk about our central demand in (nearly) all our messaging.

Similarly we can promote our central demand when messaging around Actions, Campaigns and events in the news.

Running a campaign about Dirty Water? Talk about people being outraged by this situation, and how a Citizens' Assembly would demand a better system.

Joining with other movements to march for Peace? Talk about how wide public opposition for war is, and that a more representative democracy wouldn't have consented to it.

Key Ideas

- Through our demands, XRUK is not saying what should be done to address the climate and ecological emergency - we are saying that the people should decide on what steps need to be taken, and how these should be rolled out to ensure that people are not unfairly impacted.
- Citizens' assemblies are proven to result in decisions that are informed, fair, long-term and free of undue influence. And by involving ordinary people drawn from different walks of life in the process, the results are more likely to be broadly accepted and to be seen to be in the best interests of the majority, rather than the few.
- A citizens' assembly can be run to address any issue of broad public concern, so no matter what issue we are highlighting through our messaging, in nearly every case we can meaningfully be calling for a citizens' assembly.

Why CAs are great! The 4 pillars of CAs

Existing system	Citizens' assembly
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<p>Not representative or well informed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1st past the post system means many voters are not represented. - Elected MPs are generally not representative of people from diverse backgrounds. - MPs often vote along party lines with limited knowledge or understanding of the issues at hand 	<p>True Representation and well informed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ordinary people selected from different walks of life to represent the wider population. - Assembly members are informed about all sides of an issue and listen to a broad range of perspectives. They ask questions, evaluate the evidence and check facts in order to weigh up the options, discuss the trade-offs and decide together.
<p>Not independent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Influenced by party funders and vested interests 	<p>Independent and free from vested interests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual citizens much less likely to be subject to influence
<p>Based on conflict with winners and losers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Competition and point-scoring not conducive to cross-party collaboration - Loudest voice often “wins” the argument 	<p>Truly collaborative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaboration, based on respect, active listening and open and honest deliberation - Everyone has an equal right to be heard; there are no winners or losers
<p>Short-term thinking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The electoral cycle incentivises popular, short-term solutions that will win votes - Unable to deliver the long-term, radical ideas that are needed to address the climate and ecological crisis 	<p>Long-term radical solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CA members can think beyond the electoral cycle and propose more radical solutions - Collective wisdom and intelligence of a group of diverse people far outstrips homogenous grouping of elected politicians - Able to break through the deadlock imposed by the current system, and come up with the solutions needed.

Potential hooks for reinforcing the 4 pillars

When our politicians seem disconnected from the public or take decisions that ignore the interests of different groups or communities...

We can explain that CAs are made up of ordinary people from different walks of life (gender, age, ethnicity etc.) randomly selected like a jury. The CA is a cross section of society, a ‘mini public’, a group of people with a range of lived experiences, opinions and attitudes.

When parties’ paymasters and those lobbying MPs are revealed in the media...

We can say that the members of CAs are independent from donors and lobbyists.

When MPs are seen arguing and scoring political points...

We can say that, in contrast, CAs are a great example of collaboration, where people listen to and learn from one another, and work together to develop solutions that are fair and just.

When any short term policy or announcement is made designed to win votes...

We can say that a CA allows long term thinking and enables more radical solutions to be proposed.

Specific examples of linking messaging to our central demand

Situation	Suggested Response
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Disillusionment with the political process and polarization of debate	CAs provide a great way to bring people together from different backgrounds and with diverse experiences, and to build bridges.
Protests from sections of society against climate policies	CAs comprise ordinary people from many walks of life and involve them in decision-making, so the results are more likely to be broadly accepted
Further Government restrictions on climate protests / actions	Rather than suppressing the voices of ordinary people, the Government should be involving them in deciding what actions society needs to take
Roll-back or watering down of climate policies	The current system is unable to commit to the long-term policies we need: it's time to let the people decide
Worsening news on the climate and ecological emergency	Our current system is failing us. It's time to let the people decide: demand a UK-wide citizens' assembly on climate and ecological justice
Examples of harm by particular sectors/industries	Citizens' assemblies are free of vested interests and can come up with solutions that benefit the many, rather than the few

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