Messaging Apps Overview

As a decentralised network, there is no one communication tool that everybody uses. That can sometimes make it tricky to connect with people. Don't worry, you're not alone!

To help you create a group chat, we will compare four apps most commonly used by XR groups.

Ultimately the app you choose comes down to what you and the other people are comfortable with, including how safe and secure you need to be. If security and organisation are your priority, you may well choose more than one app and use them in combination.

To help minimise information overwhelm, try to plan what chats you need carefully and use existing chats where possible, rather than creating more new ones.

> Communication channels for a specific actions work a bit differently. If you need secrecy and safety, create temporary channels with just those who need to know (with disappearing messages) and use "airgapping" to break up the information flow where appropriate. Delete these channels after use. Head over to this page for lots more detail on how to do secure internal comms for an action.

Our recommendations can be summarised as:

If your group...

- **...organises lots of different things at once**, use Mattermost. The extra features and discoverability should really help to make your group more productive.
- **...organises a lot of actions**, use Mattermost combined with Signal for the added security.

Overview

WhatsApp

WhatsApp is widely used by people outside of XR but it is not secure so is not great for organising. It doesn’t sync up with Mattermost.

However, Whatsapp Communities can be very useful for keeping all of your (non-spicy) comms in one place. A community is a collection of chat channels, and individuals can choose which ones to

join. Each community also has a central Broadcast-only channel.

- More detail on WhatsApp here
- 2025 article comparing WhatsApp and Telegram security

Telegram

Telegram is used for XRUK's broadcast channels.

It’s an encrypted messaging service with lots of features. You can edit and pin messages, see the chat history after you join a channel, locate media, and each chat can hold a large number of people. It’s also accessible on nearly any device. A limit on message word count can impact broadcast posts.

Telegram has some good features that Whatsapp does not have.

However, there have been recent concerns about the security of Telegram, as not all messages are End to End Encrypted and there is a lack of transparency around who Telegram is sharing its data with.

- More detail on Telegram here
- 2025 article comparing WhatsApp and Telegram security

Mattermost

We run our own dedicated communication tool, called Mattermost (if you're familiar with Slack or Microsoft Teams, it's a bit like those). We host it on our own secure servers powered by renewable energy and it is accessible on both phone or computer.

It is used by most XRUK teams and is also available to all groups. It's a great way to connect to any group or team in the movement: look for the dozens of "reception" channels, where you can pop in to ask questions. You can also connect directly with individual users by direct message.

However, users who are not used to this sort of platform can sometimes find it overwhelming or confusing, which is why many local groups choose other platforms.

- There is lots of help and support here on Rebel Toolkit
- More detail on Mattermost here

Signal

Signal is widely used by action planning groups and organisers. It’s the most secure encrypted chat with a disappearing message function. It’s also visually clean and crisp.

However, it’s not possible to pin or thread messages or edit your messages after 15 minutes, making it less useful for mass communications.

- More detail on Signal here

Summary Table

	WhatsApp	Telegram	Mattermost	Signal
Security	★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★★
Accessibility	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★
Features	★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★
Discoverability	★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★