

Messaging

Designing your messaging and XRUK messaging packs

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Designing your Message

A message is a clear, easy-to-understand sentence that sums up what you're trying to achieve with your action. It should be simple enough that you could tell it to someone at the bus stop and they will understand straightaway what it's about.

The M&M team's job is to come up with this message, and then communicate it consistently on all media platforms.

Good messaging is about building a relationship with the people impacted by and involved in the issue you are talking about - people who might do something about it.

The **XRUK Strategy** asks us to use resonance and invitation to win a wider spectrum of support. It points us towards a target audience who are **not already activists** - i.e. people *not* like us! And it acknowledges that "local groups will know best which issues will resonate most in their communities, and which will provide opportunities to illustrate to new groups the increased power accorded by NVDA."

Follow the steps below to create a basic messaging strategy for an action, event or story. There's a video that talks you through the process on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/pmmSTzhQcP4> (7 min).

Speak to your National/Regional messaging team, or the XRUK M&M team, to find out about messaging training and resources.

Step 1. Who needs to know what?

Ask yourself what you are trying to achieve overall. More rebels? More people understanding that the climate and ecological emergency is important? What's your call to action? Be really clear.

Also be really clear who you are seeking this reaction from. You need to decide, at least in broad terms, which group of people this message is aimed at and why.

Your message is not simply information about an action that's happening - the action is the vehicle you will use to get the message across. And the message is what you want your target audience to know, and what they should do with that knowledge now they have it.

Step 2. How do they need to get the info?

What do you know about your target audience? Is that fact, or assumption? Do some research and check your facts. People regularly waste a lot of time making assumptions about their target audience.

Who do they respect/listen to? Do they know about XR? Do they trust XR (if not, look for [alliances](#) with people or organisations they do trust to deliver the message instead).

What issues do they care about? What makes them happy, angry, sad? What language and imagery do your target audience use? You need to be using the same ones.

Step 3. What's the best way to reach a target audience?

Direct meetings? Events, online content, news media? What does this group of people read, watch, listen to?

Focus on the channel that will reach your target audience. Don't waste time sending press releases to every outlet or doing a video that isn't done in a style that appeals to your target audience.

Remember: they are unlikely to like what you like (we are targeting people *not* like us, after all). So you may need to put out content you personally dislike or don't connect with.

Step 4. Check the strategic fit.

Check the messaging fits your strategy and "brand".

Does your message align with delivering the overall strategic goals of the Movement? You can check the strategy out [on this page](#).

Have you considered whether your message could be misinterpreted and cause a problem with another target audience? If so, can you re-word it?

Step 5. Did it work?

Think about how you will gauge whether your message had the right impact on your target audience?

You need to consider a communications plan as a two way conversation with the target audience.

- What feedback have you received?
- Who has engaged with you?
- How will you respond?

Don't keep sending the same message without solid evidence that it's working to achieve what you want. Keep adapting and refining it until you have evidence that it is.

Tone of voice

These guidelines will help you when writing as XR on social media, whether you're creating content or answering comments.

Remember that you are speaking as XR, not as yourself, so bypass your own ego and try to come from a place of humility and compassion. It can be very difficult sometimes as trolls can be a very frustrating species. Don't hesitate to seek some help before answering comments (if they are worth answering at all).

Our motivation is:

- To recruit the Sympathetic
- To make the Waverers more sympathetic
- To make the Reluctant less reluctant
- To pacify and inform the Angry
- To shut down or remove the Trolls and Haters

At all times try to engage and open dialogue, but try to recognise where discussion will probably be fruitless.

Your XR Voice should be simple, kind and self deprecatory; direct yet friendly; informative and engaging, authoritative yet warm and delivered with humility.

Guidelines

- Describe science with neutral, factual vocabulary
- Use supporting stories, not just facts, when they assist
- Use negative terms (e.g. apocalypse, emergency, crisis) with positive messaging (honour & duty, truth, meaning of life)
- Appeal to a broad cultural spectrum, not just alternative and left-wing perspectives, the people we need to involve will come from all sides and backgrounds
- Avoid sarcasm, cynicism and generally misplaced humour - our framing is pretty serious so stay serious, with a light touch
- Stay clear and concise and avoid insider language, acronyms and emotive terms
- Stay honest about the starkness of the emerging catastrophe, but don't indulge in doomerism. Don't predict dystopias.
- When answering a depressed person's comment, highlight the opportunities for potential, positive changes by joining XR. Keep a pessimistic head, but an optimistic heart.
- Focus on the converging crises that we face rather than climate change alone.
- Always think about who you are talking to and the language that might appeal to them. We don't know their backstory, and a kind word can make a big difference. What are you trying to say? Could you say it in a different, more engaging way? What will your audience

hear?

- Don't give official XR posts your individual voice - try to write like you are XR, not yourself. But occasionally, the stories we tell can include some personal testimony when appropriate, but can still avoid personal voice.

Messaging Packs

XRUK produces messaging packs which XR groups around the movement can use for their own comms

"Rebel for Truth" Messaging Pack 2024



Messaging Pack 2024

It's nearly 5 years since the [Declaration of Rebellion](#). Why are we still having to talk about this shit?

The Public Order Act has changed the landscape in which we are taking action. It is intended to make people feel powerless - but we aren't. They want people to forget the **change** they can create when they come together. We are inviting them to remember.

Across the country communities of **resistance** are growing. Rebels in local groups are building alliances, and taking actions around local issues that matter to them, culminating in coordinated action on the last day of the month - every month.

We have always sounded the alarm, and now we sound the alarm for **truth**. Our system is broken, and all those in power are complicit. With truth we will make a stand, a **bold** and rebellious stand,

for all life on earth. The lies about the climate and ecological crisis, what's causing it and what's being done about it. The lies that justify inequality, racism, injustice, colonialism, speciesism and ecocide. The lies that vilify action and perpetuate apathy.

What is the unifying thread that unites an action against an incinerator in Edmonton and tree cutting in Wellingborough? It is that we are all Extinction Rebellion, bound by the same demands, principles and values.

There is one answer to the situation we are in, an antidote to the lies and misinformation. It is the answer because we believe in the power of people - we demand a **Citizens' Assembly** on Climate and Ecological Justice.

There is power in unity and many voices speaking as one, but there is also strength in the words that connect to your community. Consider this page a toolkit. If it contains things that help you get the job done then use it, but it is an **invitation not an instruction**.

REBEL FOR TRUTH

Why are we Rebelling for Truth?

Since XR first burst onto the streets we have said "Tell the truth and act as if the truth is real". Truth is the antidote to climate lies and climate liars. Truth is strong. Truth is defiant. Truth is unapologetic.

We non-violently challenge and disrupt the climate villains whose lies are stopping the scientific truth from driving an urgent and just transition. With humour, with creativity, with unity, we present an inspiring alternative vision to the toxic system that allows climate lies to flourish as the crisis destroys our global life support system before our eyes.

Are You Okay With This?

Hell no. Greenwashing and inaction are everywhere. This is a question both for the climate criminals, and for the public.

This year has featured more evidence of climate breakdown in the form of a record-breaking cyclone in south-eastern Africa, raging wildfires in Europe and an unbearable heatwave across Asia. On our doorstep effluent is knowingly pumped into our rivers and pollution into our air as the government takes more steps to silence dissent. Once you've looked truth in the eye, the next question is what are you going to do about it?

CITIZENS ASSEMBLE

We must Decide Together

When you can't trust those in power, the people are the answer. Our three demands are a pathway to change. Citizens' assemblies (CAs) are the antidote to the lies and the villains, putting the decisions needed in the hands of the people.

We are trapped in a system that is outdated and out of touch. Citizen's assemblies are the alternative, putting decisions in the hands of the people. This is the first step in the system change we demand. In a time of corruption and greed, 'reasonable' starts to look revolutionary.

Remind yourself and everyone else about why CAs are the answer. Check out the resources on our [website](#) or [YouTube](#).

Need some help with how to talk about CAs? Read more [here](#).



Flyers

Flyers have been produced that align with this messaging.

You can [download them here to print yourself](#), or [order them from the outreach order form](#).

These flyers are available in Welsh through the 'print yourself' link above. If there is a language you would like outreach materials in please email media@rebellion.earth

Social Media

Find social media assets for you or you group to use [here](#).

Hashtags

#RebelForTruth

#AreYouOkayWithThis

#CitizensAssemble

#DecideTogether

#UniteToSurvive



Paint the Symbol - Here Comes Everyone

In 1996 a small group of people who went on to lead the Serbian resistance took to the streets and spray painted their symbol, and the word “otpor” - resistance. They knew that under an oppressive regime people wouldn’t feel they could come out onto the streets unless they thought that everyone else was. The symbol appearing everywhere created the movement it hinted at, which in turn overthrew a dictator.

The extinction symbol is already iconic. Recreate it on walls, in windows, anywhere you can imagine. Let’s reignite the [paint the symbol campaign](#) with love, creativity - and of course a little bit of mischief.



Posters

Spread the message even further. Stick a poster in your window, take a bundle to flypost, or anything else you can think of.

Find some colourful ones and some black and white ones [suitable for home printing here](#) (would look fab printed onto pink or green paper!). Post them everywhere you can as a show of pride. Normalise being in rebellion!

Fonts

Karla

You might have noticed this font popping up instead of the classic Crimson. That's because serif fonts are harder for many people to read, especially if they are dyslexic. When we say we welcome everyone, we want them to feel welcome too! [Get it here.](#)

Fucked Caps

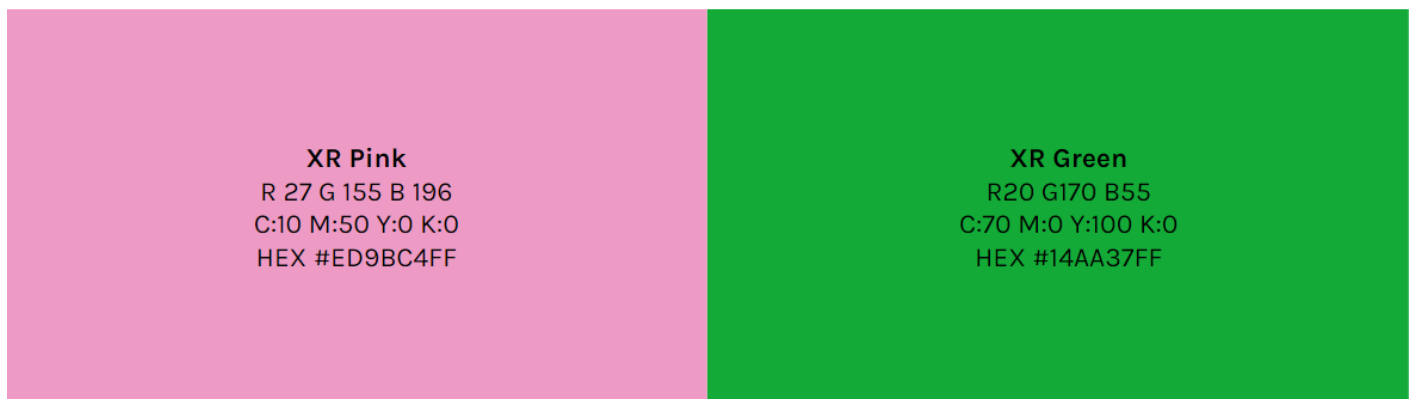
Get the classic [Fucked Caps here.](#)

Colours

The [XR Design Programme](#) has a beautiful array of colours, but sometimes simplicity speaks for itself. Leaning into our signature pink, complemented by the classic green is a combination that

never goes out of style.

Using the same colours as other actions for your banner or social media graphics is an easy and simple way to tie what you're doing and saying into the wider narrative, even if the rest of your messaging is tailored to a specific campaign or local issues.



Flags

The Extinction Symbol is iconic and uniting, and never more so than when it is fluttering in the wind.

Find everything you need to know about [making flags here](#) and a [video on how to block print the symbol on them here](#).

FAQs

What is XR up to?

Thanks for asking! We're pretty busy. We are implementing our new strategy, and diversifying both our tactics and our spectrum of support. That's not the sort of magic that takes place overnight. XR holds a unique position among the ecology of environmental groups - we are the only one with the potential to truly be a mass NVDA movement, capable of forcing the government to meet our demands. And to achieve the change necessary we need everyone. That means growing our local groups, building alliances and connecting with communities that previously we have not managed to engage with.

Did The Big One even do anything?

Movements that last are movements that adapt and change, and in XR we flow like water. This means adapting our strategy to an over-changing environment, because doing the same thing all the time just isn't going to do the job.

In order to keep up the pressure we need to be unafraid to diversify our tactics in response to an ever-changing climate. This keeps us fresh and radical, and keeps those in power on their toes. We

know that what we achieved in April scared those in power, because it was unexpected, and the unexpected isn't something they can predict and plan for. Now we need to build on that.

What about our theory of change?

A theory of change is not a monolith, it is not a thing that is written and remains rigid and unbending. Reflecting and learning is built into our principles and values for a reason, and nowhere is this more true than our strategy. Looking to all those who have stepped into resistance is great, but it doesn't tell us what to do now - because we've never done this before. And everything is at stake.

War & Peace (messaging connecting conflict & climate)



**WHAT HAS CONFLICT GOT
TO DO WITH THE CLIMATE
AND ECOLOGICAL
EMERGENCY?**

See the [Slideshow of this document](#) to see the sources and references for the information on this page.

What are these messaging guidelines for?

There is a strong link between the climate and ecological emergency and conflict, but it is not a simple or linear one and so it is not one that people can always automatically connect to.

- Of the 25 most climate-vulnerable nations, over half are already in conflict. A 2019 study from Stanford University found climate change contributed to between 3% to 20% of conflicts over the last century with the potential influence set to increase substantially due

to warming global temperatures.

- The Darfur conflict in Sudan is the first acknowledged "climate change conflict" triggered by ecological crises, drought, and rapid desertification, but almost certainly will not be the last.
- War harms biodiversity in many ways, affecting land and natural resources, and contributing to the extinction and loss of species. Over 90% of the major armed conflicts between 1950 and 2000 occurred within countries containing biodiversity hotspots, and more than 80% took place directly within hotspot areas.

Just as the UK profits from the climate and ecological emergency, it profits from conflicts. Banks such as Barclays are investing in arms just as much as they are fossil fuel projects. The media creates a hierarchy of suffering, focusing time and attention on some conflicts and neglecting others – many of the conflicts happening in the world are rarely mentioned in the UK. A powerful thing rebels can do is redress this balance.

Peace and stability is essential for effective and timely climate action and adaptation by countries around the world. As Extinction Rebellion the most significant contribution we can make is to continue to apply pressure to the UK government to give power back to the people.

It is hoped these resources will empower you to speak with confidence about the connection between the climate and ecological emergency and conflict. If you need any additional support, please contact media@rebellion.earth



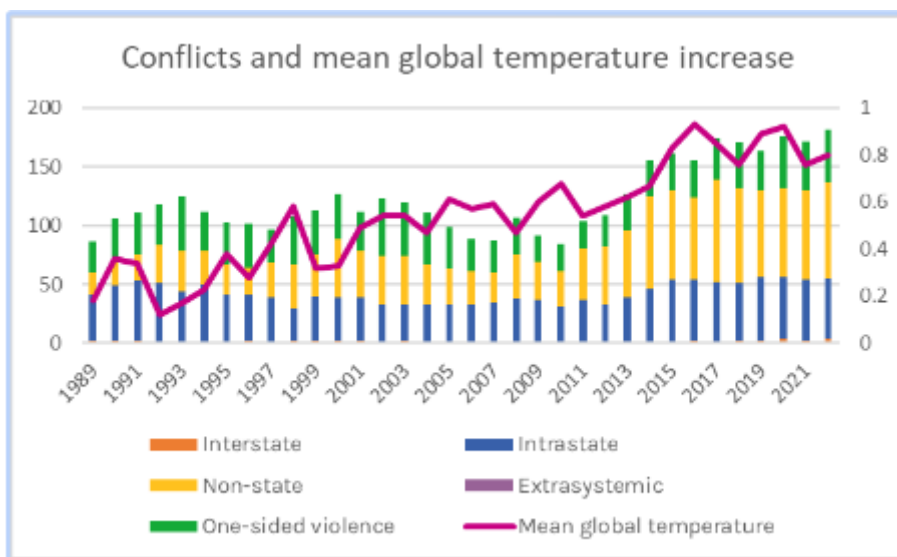
The climate and ecological emergency (CEE) is the ultimate expression of the crisis in our politics and our society. Both the CEE and conflict are rooted in oppression, both historic and current, and

perpetuated by institutions and corporations entwined in a web of exploitation that profits from injustice. Unifying factors - such as exploitation, colonialism, racism and poverty bind these issues together, as those on the frontlines of the climate and ecological emergency are also likely to be suffering from violence and oppression.

It's all connected

There is already data that suggests that the number of conflicts is rising, along with the global temperature increase. This is a trend we are likely to see continue as the earth continues to heat, and the impacts of the climate emergency become more acute. Conflict over resources, destabilising of regimes and natural disasters will all exacerbate the situation.

“We are facing the highest number of violent conflicts since 1945. From Yemen to Syria, Myanmar and Sudan. From Haiti to the Sahel and on and on.” - Antonio Guterres, Secretary General of the UN.



- Interstate: A conflict between states
- Intrastate: A conflict between a state and a non-state armed group inside the state's territory
- Extrasystemic: A conflict between a state and a non-state armed group outside the state's territory
- Non-state: A conflict between non-state armed groups, such as rebel groups, criminal organizations, or ethnic groups
- One sided violence: The use of armed force by a state or non-state armed group against civilians

Today's Armed Conflicts

Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Columbia, Cyprus, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Georgia, India, Iraq, Israel, Libya, Mali, Mexico, Moldova, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, the Philippines, Russia, Senegal, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan, Syria, Turkey, Ukraine, Western Sahara, Yemen.

Source: [Today's Armed Conflicts - The Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian](#)

Key Facts

- A 2019 study from Stanford University found climate change contributed to between 3% to 20% of conflicts over the last century with the potential influence set to increase substantially due to warming global temperatures.
- The World Food Program USA recognises that conflict and climate change are the two things driving most of the hunger in the world - but doesn't talk about the overlap between the two.
- Each of the five major high street banks – Barclays, HSBC, Royal Bank of Scotland, Lloyds TSB and Halifax Bank of Scotland (now a subsidiary of Lloyds) – invests in, issues loans to and serves as principal banker for British and international arms companies.
- If the world's militaries were a single country, they would rank as the fourth or fifth largest emitter in the world, following China, the United States, India, and the European Union.
- Britain has sent £1.5bn worth of military equipment to 39 of the world's 40 most climate-vulnerable countries since 2008, potentially inflaming both war and the global environmental crisis.
- Media research shows it is thought wars in Africa are of little interest to the West because they are happening to people too far away, who are too different, living in countries that are not 'important' enough.
- Yemen's civil war has been declared the "world's worst humanitarian crisis.". Throughout the country, a catastrophic cholera crisis has developed, little in the country is functioning, millions of people do not have enough food, and more than 10,000 people have been killed in conflict. Drought has exacerbated the conflict by drying up water sources, putting more than half of the population at risk of extreme water shortages - estimated to be over 10m people.
- Armed and intercommunal conflict in the east of the DRC is a key driver of displacement, causing mass population movement and rendering local communities, refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) even more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.
- The planet-warming emissions generated during the first two months of the war in Gaza were greater than the annual carbon footprint of more than 20 of the world's most climate-vulnerable nations.
- The large-scale exploitation of oil by foreign companies operating in the theatre of war in southern Sudan is reported to have increased human rights abuses there and has

exacerbated the long-running conflict, a conflict marked already by gross human rights abuses—two million dead, four million displaced since 1983—and recurring famine and epidemics.

- Landmines and other explosive remnants have directly killed many animals, including elephants in Sri Lanka, snow leopards in Afghanistan, tigers in Cambodia, gazelles in Libya, camels in China, and water buffalo in Vietnam.
- “In our rapidly changing world climate change – and its potential to trigger both violent conflict and mass migration – needs to be considered as an urgent priority for policymakers and business leaders alike.” Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) director, Steve Trent 17

More facts can be found in the [War and Peace doc](#) and the [spokesperson briefing](#). These will continue to be added to over time.



How are XRUK speaking about conflict?

Considerable thought from many teams has gone into this, and it is included here as a resource for the consideration of local groups.

- We forefront the climate and ecological emergency. We do not lose our identity as a climate movement - if we cannot speak from that lens, it is likely not the right topic for us. We do not have to speak about everything.
- We do not place one conflict above others This is a challenge, especially when we feel the moral imperative to speak about the horrors we currently see on the news. But actually

this makes it all the more important to highlight the range of conflicts ignored by the media.

- We highlight the theme of unequal participation in power Speaking about conflict doesn't absolve us of the need to always highlight our Third Demand in our messaging.
- We do not use the slogans of others. We use our own voice, explicitly making links to exacerbating climate impacts and consequential ecological disasters of conflict and do not reduce complexities of conflicts to taglines.
- We make space for the voices and experiences of those involved in conflicts. The diaspora community are a vital connection to this conversation, and a part of our strategy that has not yet achieved its potential.
- We do not become partisan or use messaging that picks sides We embrace a clear and unifying call for peace.

The events of October and 7th and beyond promoted a lot of conversation across the movement about how we could and should talk about this as XRUK.

There are so many people who are already doing work here, it is not for Extinction Rebellion to take that and make it our own. We should be supporting them, in a way that complements our aims as XR. .

One of our strengths as Extinction Rebellion is that we do not take a partisan stance, we do not pick sides. We are always guided by our three demands and principles and values. What we can bring of value to this conversation is to continue to unite people.

What does solidarity look like?

Solidarity takes many forms, and you should be sensitive to the feelings of the groups you are working with including rebels in your local group. You should seek to establish consent of your group, before embarking on potentially contentious actions or alliances. Many other groups may be happy for rebels to turn up at their events with flags and banners, or they may wish for you to not identify yourselves as XR. It is important to have conversations with your local group so you all know where the lines are for you, and others you are engaging with.

Some rebels will choose to take action with other groups, not as XR. The ecology of movements is a beautiful and varied thing, and there is a place for everything and everyone. We do not need to make everything about us.

The most important thing to remember as you nurture these relationships is that they are not ones that are for the duration of a topic being in the public consciousness - genuine and authentic solidarity carries on long after conflict has dropped out of the media cycle and stopped trending on social media.

It is important to remember that if we are identifying ourselves as Extinction Rebellion, we should be upholding our principles and values at all times. Not all groups we interact with hold our same commitment to nonviolence, in words or in deed. This may be in the form of chants or other behaviour we do not expect. Check out the [de-escalation resources on the toolkit](#).

More Resources

- [War and Peace full document- further reading](#)
- [War and Peace XR spokesperson briefing](#)
- [Source: Today's Armed Conflicts - The Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights](#)
- See the [slideshow of this document](#) to see the sources and references for the information on this page.
- [Understanding Antisemitism and Islamophobia in the context of Israel and Palestine](#)