

Post-Assembly Polis Report

Background

On Sunday 27 July, we had our first XRUK Movement Assembly. Around 80 participants took part and a full summary can be found [here](#).

In breakout groups, participants were asked to generate ideas that were then added to [pol.is](#), “a real-time system for gathering, analysing and understanding what large groups of people think. Participated by putting statements for voting on in their own words”.

The thirty-four statements developed in the break-out rooms were then opened up to the whole of the XRUK's mailing list, so 858 people responded to those statements. Participants were shown all these statements in a [semi-random order](#) and could choose to ‘Agree’, ‘Disagree’ or ‘Pass’.

Everyone saw different statements to other people, then those ideas that got the most support were displayed more often, as the algorithm in Polis weighted statements where there was more consensus.

Results

The full pol.is results can be found [here](#). We recommend that everyone to take some time to explore them, but we have also summarised the findings below.

Overall, almost all the statements were found to garner consensus (Figure 1), showing that the statements submitted were fairly undivisive. For all statements, ‘Agree’ was the most common response; for only 14 of the 34 statements did we see fewer than 60% of participants choose ‘Agree’.



Consensus statements

Divisive statements

Figure 1 Consensus statements (the majority) appear on the left; divisive statements appear on the right.*

Each statement appeared as a single dot; this showed how when people agreed with one statement, they also tended to agree with other specific ideas, ie there were groupings around some ideas.

Initially, when the version of Pol.is was still live, you could hover over each dot to view the individual statement; there is only a short window to view the interactive results, due to having to delete aspects of the data for privacy protection.

There were **only two statements that were found to be more divisive**, with the first especially divisive and the second still on the consensus side, i.e.:

1. XR should consider identifying individuals within polluting organisations who are destroying their children’s futures (in red in Figure 1).
2. Plan actions and campaigns linked to future infectious disease and avoiding harm. Climate breakdown raises the risk of pandemics.

Groups

Polis breaks the respondents down into groups of people who have similar opinions, but also shows where they diverge in some way from people in other groups. In this analysis, two groups were found:

Group A (525; 61%) - their responses can be summarised as mostly agreeing with the statements; for only four statements did fewer than 50% of Group A agree. They were particularly supportive of ally building and local action and engaging the wider public.

Group B (225; 26%) - their responses can be summarised as mostly disagreeing with the statements; for no statement did 50% or more of Group B agree. They also passed with a much higher frequency than Group A. The statements for which they showed most support tended to relate to XR policy and strategy, but were fairly mixed.

108 people weren’t grouped (13%) - Because of the way that pol.is was used, given limited understanding at the time, so Pol.is was treated as a simple voting tool. As a result, these people’s input unfortunately has no effect on the overall results and they have been omitted by the tool.

Despite the differences between these two groups, the top statements were the two most supported statements for Group A and the 3rd and joint 6th most supported statements for Group B. Figure 2 shows the breakdown of these two questions.







STATEMENT	OVERALL 750	A 525	B 225
22 Collaborate with as many allies as possible to deliver national and local actions on key issues such as water, nature and food	 77% 5% 16% (710)	 92% 0% 7% (495)	 42% 17% 39% (215)
14 Connect on major issues - water is a national and local issue. Create a common narrative and empower people to take action in their area.	 76% 5% 18% (713)	 91% 0% 8% (497)	 40% 15% 43% (216)

Figure 2 The two most popular statements overall, with results for the whole cohort, Group A and Group B.*

These were the two statements with the most consensus, whether you just look at the overall majority, or whether you search for maximum consensus between the groups. The most popular statement related to ally building and the second refers to making national issues local; both echo decisions taken in the 2025 strategy, though these results must not be taken as representative of wider opinion.

Figure 3 shows the 3rd to 10th most consensual statements, when taking into account the weighting of each of the groups (if we order solely by majority, the order of these statements changes slightly). There are a wide-range of topics covered in this group of statements but that mainly relate to XR direction and providing actions that can be regularly implemented at a local level.
















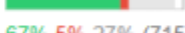








STATEMENT	OVERALL 750	A 525	B 225
5 Join the dots about power and wealth and inequality with actions that resonate.	 71% 5% 23% (713)	 82% 2% 15% (497)	 44% 13% 41% (216)
18 Pick our battles carefully: what are we trying to achieve	 67% 4% 27% (701)	 74% 2% 23% (492)	 49% 11% 38% (209)
28 Providing a clearer and more relatable story regarding XR's aims and objectives.	 70% 5% 23% (704)	 82% 1% 16% (491)	 42% 15% 41% (213)
1 Reach out to people locally about climate issues that affect them (e.g. food/energy prices, flooding, water).	 73% 5% 21% (711)	 89% 0% 10% (494)	 38% 15% 46% (217)
16 Use creativity, theatre, drama and humour to produce artistic and engaging actions that the media can't ignore.	 66% 7% 26% (702)	 76% 2% 20% (490)	 42% 17% 40% (212)
23 Provide people with meaningful and varied avenues to action	 67% 5% 27% (715)	 81% 0% 18% (499)	 35% 15% 49% (216)
17 Map, reach out to, and build community relationships with local media, local authority and other climate and nature sympathetic groups.	 70% 5% 23% (699)	 87% 0% 12% (485)	 32% 17% 50% (214)
29 Coordinated monthly UK climate and ecological emergency focused nonviolent direct actions, targeting facilitators of collapse.	 60% 7% 31% (705)	 69% 4% 26% (492)	 40% 15% 44% (213)

Figure 3 The 3rd-10th statements that drew the most consensus, when looking to draw consensus between groups.*

In terms of future assemblies or pol.is conversations to engage the wider movement in the future of XR, statements 18 and 28, (4th and 5th in the ordering), would make good topics, as they suit the conversational nature of pol.is best practice.

Summary

Overall, there was high consensus on most of the statements, with the vast majority of respondents agreeing with a lot of the statements. This gives a ranking of the most consensual statements, and shows that there are two groups of respondents - one of which agrees with more

things and one that is much less in support of the type of statements suggested and more discerning in what they agree with. It's also interesting to note that three groups were found in the pre-Assembly pol.is poll. This was not reflected here and there didn't seem to be the same group who were only interested in supporting statements related to internal XR reform.

Considerations

It's important to remember that not everyone on the XRUK mailing list responded to this pol.is exercise. In fact, **less than 1% of the current mailing list took part**. This cohort is likely to be a more-engaged, active percentage than the average mailing-list member. It is also important to remember that pol.is is not a straightforward preference aggregation tool. In particular, the statements will have been shown in semi-random order, influenced by previous responses, and that no statement received a response from 100% of participants, suggesting many did not get through all 34. This doesn't mean it's not valuable, but is something to take into account when interpreting the results.

What happens next?

This is just the start of the process of democratic deliberation that will take place over the coming months. There will also continue to be iteration on the use of the pol.is tool, to make the most of this interesting way of finding consensus. These consensus statements will now be passed to the Operations Circle for deliberation with a concrete proposal to use pol.is for a proper, movement-wide conversation.

How might we use pol.is in the future?

Pol.is is an innovative, interactive tool that allows consensus to be found between groups that apparently display division of opinion. Other projects have found that a common feature of pol.is conversations is that they demonstrate how societies or communities have more uniting them than dividing them; this is rarely acknowledged in political discourse. In 2020, the BBC made a [short documentary](#) about how the tool has been used in Taiwan, and it has also been used successfully in countries as diverse as the UK, Uruguay, Bhutan, Timor Leste, New Zealand, cities in the US and Greece, and political parties, among others.

The tool has been most successfully used in the form of an extended conversation, in which participants can rate statements, add their own, and return to rate new statements. The idea is that participants are encouraged to return to the conversation various times to vote on the new statements that have been submitted, and the aim of the 'game' is for participants to create statements that bring consensus within the whole cohort - both among those who already share the same opinion and others who can be brought closer to consensus. As patterns emerge of statements likely to create consensus, these will appear first when participants return to vote. For example, if a divisive statement is added, it will not receive consensus and will be 'downvoted' and become less visible to participants because we already know it will not achieve consensus, whereas a statement that cuts across groups will 'rise to the top'.

Planning and delivering such an asynchronous conversation will require significant work, but the rewards in terms of identifying a unifying future direction for XR are significant.

References

[Paice, Andy, and Martin Rausch. Creating an Online Conversation between a Nation and a Mini-Public: A Case Study on Polis & the Austrian Citizens' Climate Council. CII, 2022. The Computational Democracy Project.](#)
