Talking about the Crisis on the Street

When Nonviolent Civil Disobedience has been most effective, it has taken place on a foundation of connected and organised communities. Actions are our primary way to get into the public eye but our actions alone are not enough. We need to use these actions to start conversations, to tell the truth and to open our arms to all who wish to join us.

Talking to Passers By

Part of our purpose as rebels is to Tell the Truth, so engaging with the general public during actions is vital. Some might be a bit annoyed with you/Extinction Rebellion, so it may be useful to have some de-escalation training under your belt, but most are simply curious!

Aim To:
• Listen to them.
• Share the facts but don't overwhelm them.
• Shift their frustrations and anger from XR to the system as a whole.
• Invite them to take a step with a small ask or an invitation (leaflets are great too!).

Remember:
• Introduce yourself, be open and honest.
• It's a conversation, after the first 2 mins listen more than you talk.
• People rarely change their stance in a single moment, you are planting seeds!
• If someone is looking for an argument just step back and "agree to disagree" – there are plenty of other people to talk to!
• For more detailed advice and some answers to the difficult questions have a look at **Talking about the Crisis on the Street** and **Responding to difficult questions and hostile encounters**.

'ALLESHA'

- A : Ask a question.
- L : Listen.
- L : **LISTEN** twice as long as you usually do! We often want to interrupt and give facts too soon.
- E : Empathise. Say "I understand that you are concerned about..." or "You seem to be feeling a bit hopeless".

- S : Share your personal story of why you are involved.
- H : Hope. Talk about historical / current examples, e.g. Suffragettes, Gay rights, Civil Rights Movement / Acquittals of activists, successful prosecution of the government.
- A : Inviting them to **ACT**. Take them to the Sign-up / Info table. Ask them to join the mailing list, take a leaflet, come to this event, take a photo of the activity and share it on Social Media, etc. Better still, have a clipboard in your hand to sign up now for the mailing list and take their phone number. Start at the bottom of the ladder with simple actions.

Street Outreach Skills **HANDOUT** with further linked resources

The Crisis Quiz

One way of starting conversations with people is by using the **crisis quiz**. Its short, and only takes a minute or two, but most people are surprised by the answers and want to know more.

Starting Conversations

Some examples of open questions:
• What worries do you have about climate breakdown?
• How do you feel about the future of our food security?
• How well do you think Britain is prepared for the effects of Climate Breakdown?
• Why do you think our government has spent millions on oil and gas bailouts?

Bring the conversation to the fact that our government is negligent by not fulfilling its duty to the people. **And then listen to the answers, really listen.**

Introduce the Demands and Citizen's Assemblies – wouldn't it be great to hear what people actually want? Mention France's recent Citizen Assembly's outcome, i.e. wanting to make Ecocide a crime under national and international law.

If conversation moves to solutions, this is a great opportunity to invite them to a Community Assembly – we are trying to start the direct democracy process off in our local area! If people have experience of what real democracy looks and feels like, the closer we come to creating popular support for our 3rd demand.

Small Asks

At the end of each meaningful interaction ask people to do one thing to help (judge the right scale for the individual you've just spoken to) here are some examples:

- **Sign up on extinctionrebellion.uk** – Paper forms get lost, takes time to input and isn't the most secure!
- If you're outreaching at a local action, point them to **joinxr.uk/localgroupname**, to sign up to their local group - for example joinxr.uk/birmingham. Check your local link works first! - more information about these sign up links here.

- Monthly Donation to help us.
- Bring a care package the next day! This could contain Food, tea or blankets!
- Come to our Community Assembly to have your voice heard.
- Check out your Local Group, here is their email address.
- Come join us on site!

On-the-Ground Signposting & Recruiting

Don’t be afraid to recruit people on site!
People will often come along to check out an Action/Rebellion site if they are passing by, or if they are in a Local Group but haven’t taken a role and just want to help out. We don’t turn people away! Make sure they don’t move into arrestable positions without having done an NVDA training, but don’t hesitate to give them something to do. The best thing you can possibly do is be friendly and welcoming. Be someone they want to keep talking to.

- Have they signed up on Extinctionrebellion.uk?
- If they want to help in an ongoing capacity, point them towards the Volunteer Website at **Volunteer.Extinctionrebellion.uk**, introduce them to their Local Group, or introduce them to a working group on site.
- Make sure to have a list of things people can do to help out that require minimal instruction!

For Example:

1. Flyers – handing out or flyposting
2. Sustenance – give out tea & snacks on site
3. Talking to the Public – have 10 min trainings ready so they can learn and practice!
