Elements of Paint the Streets

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Paint The Symbol

Let's get the Extinction Symbol EVERYWHERE!

Why? The more visible XR is, the better our cause will land with the public. There are many who would like to silence us: we need to be unmissable.

How? Sharpies, stencils and paint; posters, stickers... and boundless imagination. Here are some ideas:

Every Day Symboling

Get yourself a stash of markers, and take them out with you. Something like the Uni Paint PX-20 is good. At a minimum, get black and white.

Opportunity is everywhere, especially if you look out for circles!

BEFORE

AFTER

Get hold of stickers! Lamp posts, crossings, adverts – look for spots where there are clean sightlines.

WHERE ARE MORE PEOPLE GOING TO SEE THE SYMBOL? Entrances, exits, main thoroughfares. On the ceiling of the bus. A cash machine.

How about **stencilling the symbol?** You're in luck. There's a template and guide to making a symbol stencil

Affinity Symboling

Get yourself a Symbol Affinity Group, a can of spray paint and a ladder!

Height is good. Try and avoid everyone else's graff. You'll be painted over, and not stand out as well.

Plan Ahead. Stake out your 'hood. Where are the great sightlines? Where several roads meet, or where you'll have the most impact. Upset the visual narrative!

The Legal Bit

Painting The Symbol is a bit naughty, do be careful.

Obviously if you are going to actually try and turn the London Eye into The World's Largest Symbol you may end up in significantly more trouble. Check out legal guidance here.

Flyposting

Planning your flyposting action

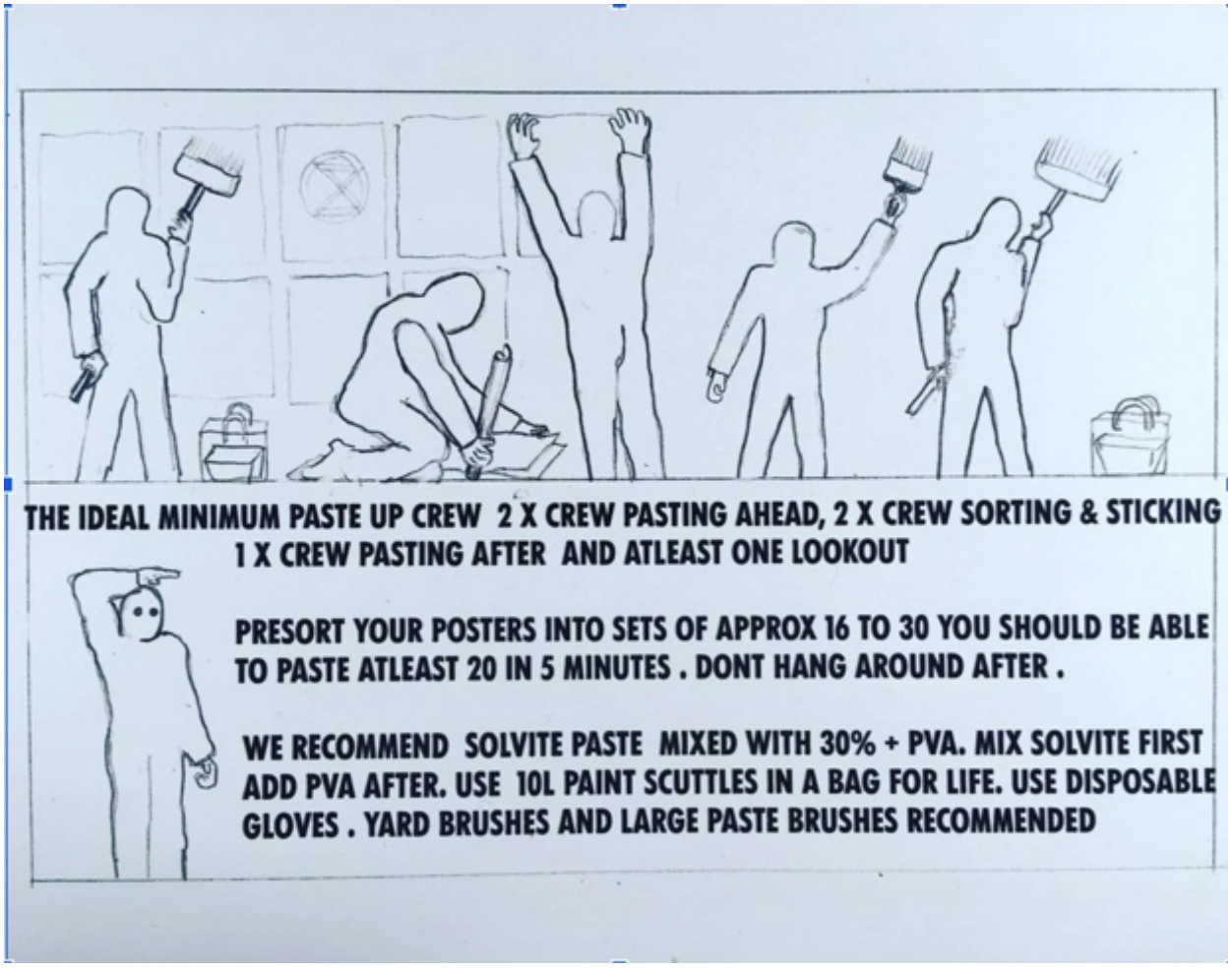
Check out this general guidance for how to organise all sorts of Paint the Streets actions, then come back here for specific advice for flyposting.

Organise a flyposting team

Get together in an affinity group of 2-5 people. Roles needed are:

- Coordinators and Police liaison
- Flyposters: 1 to roll on the paste, 1 to put up the posters, 1 to roll on more paste on top
- Social Media Rebel to take photos of the work, and post them online (don’t forget to use the hashtag #paintthestreets and tag our Facebook or Instagram pages!) as well as sharing them in the PTS Telegram chat.
- Some groups like to have look-out people, particularly in areas where security guards may be on duty.

Note: Avoid taking (or posting online) photos of anyone actually doing the flyposting as it could be used as evidence in the future. Always obtain permission before taking a photo of someone.



What materials do I need for fly-posting?

- Buckets or large tubs (to carry the paste)
- Bags (to carry everything without it being too obvious)
- Posters- find lots of poster options here and guidance on the best ways to get your posters printed here.
- Poster paste - wallpaper paste is most durable but not environmentally friendly. To make flour paste: Check out this video
- Brushes
- Rollers / & pins

Key tactics when flyposting:

- Pick a few best locations to paint.
- Pick some backup locations if you have to change plans.
- Travel as light as possible.
- Pick a meeting point and time, and communicate these via Signal or other encrypted chats the night before.
- Use emergent strategy to move: avoid planning a travel route which could be snitched on (information leaked) or messed up by delays - instead, make the route up as you go along. Change location every 20-30min depending on how discreet your action is.
- Always have a plan B.

What's a suitable target?

Remember, you don't **have** to flypost; you can give posters away and put them up on school/university noticeboards, in windows of cafes and on flyer tables. People often like being given things and to have a chance to share their thoughts on the climate and ecological emergency- use any available opportunity for outreach.

General good targets:

- Billboards or temporary walls
- Public transport - trains, back of buses, bus stops and stations
- Busy central areas in cities: town squares, statues, pedestrian areas
- Universities, colleges, schools
- Places with high pollution levels

- Locations with iconic backdrops for dramatic/symbolic effect, e.g. Eiffel Tower or Government buildings in background
- HQ’s of companies agreed as targets by XR strategy
- Companies linked to fossil fuel industry and fracking e.g. HSBC, Barclays
- On the floor in a place where lots of people get an aerial viewpoint e.g. a square surrounded by skyscrapers
- Places people queue or areas of high footfall
- Replacing ferry flags

Fly-posting Etiquette

DO target: derelict buildings, areas with existing fly-posting, electrical boxes, lamp posts, and ugly structures, temporary hoardings. Pick areas with high footfall.

DON’T target private property, institutions like schools, hospitals and police stations! Avoid pasting over someone else’s poster unless it’s out of date.

If you still need more guidance, check out this amazing website: Everything You Need to Know to Blanket the World in Posters

Stencils & Murals

Stencilling

How do I make a stencil?

Paris68redux have created a and comprehensive guide on stencil and print making

https://www.youtube.com/embed/nUFIrM_KUVk?si=UhyFUM4lK11LBWI0

Are there environmentally friendly sprays and paints?

- We recommend emulsion paint for doing stencils on paper
- We also recommend chalk spray such as Montana but it’s less ecologically sound. Prices vary but check out GraffCity and MontanaCans.
- There are a variety of other environmentally friendly graffiti options available to Rebels including: Water based spray paint; Reverse graffiti

Is it okay to chalk spray, paint or flypost local businesses?

Rebels are asked to be mindful about where they paint the streets.

Please do not damage private property or small and independent businesses as this can be seen as vandalism and might impact relationships within the community. Try and use materials which cause minimal damage to the environment.

Some actions potentially seen as “vandalism” may have a high risk of arrest if private sector buildings are targeted. It is unclear what police reaction will be to some of these actions, so read the legal advice and take precautions.

What about spraying over existing artwork?

As a golden rule don’t not tag over other posters and spray tags as this could cause conflict. Organised fly-posters and graffiti groups can be territorial and could get violent.

How do I create reverse graffiti?

Reverse graffiti (or ‘clean graffiti’) involves removing dirt or dust from a dirty surface to create an image or text. XR Bristol have created a ‘How to’ video.

Murals

Large scale murals are a big undertaking, but there are some beautiful examples that have been created over the years. If you're thinking of creating a mural you can find lots of tips and guidance in the XR Guide to Murals

Subvertising

What is Subvertising?

Subvertising is the practice of lighting up the streets with spoofs or parodies of corporate and political advertisements. By using witty and cutting satire of companies subvertisers are able to expose racial and climate injustice. We use subvertising to turn the iconography of advertisers on it's head. If images can create a brand, they can also destroy one.

Join the Paint The Streets Telegram and/or ask your actions group to connect you into subvertising spaces.

Check out XR Lambeth's ad-hacking video here.

Working with partner groups

Crews like Zap Games, Special Patrol Facebook Group and Brandalism are currently active alongside Extinction Rebellion.

Note: Brandalism and Special Patrol Group are separate organisations to XR and any reproduction of their work must be credited.

How do I get into a bus top?

There are videos, guides and websites with plenty of info but the main piece of kit people use is a T30 key, high visibility jackets and non-descript worker clothes; it's best to hide in plain sight and look like they belong when they are putting up the posters.

What artwork should I use?

To keep costs down, groups have been known to remove adverts and hand paint chosen messages on to the back of the adverts. It's also common practice to edit posters, focusing specifically on companies complicit in the climate crisis.

- Billboard sized graphics can be found here
- Bus stop sized graphics can be found here
- London Underground ad-space sized graphics can be found here (along with a guide on how to subvertise on the tube)

For Design Assets you can use to create your own artwork, check out the Paint the Streets Google Drive

Where can I get bus stop ads printed?

To print bus stops sized sheets use DigitalPrinting and select 6 sheet measuring 1,200mm x 1,800mm.

What are the legal implications?

There is generally a view that this kind of action is a lower level in arrestability.

From the Brandalism Subvertising manual:

"some legal advice from Green and Black Cross: The basic rule of thumb is 'No Comment'. In the worst case scenario, a charge is likely to be that 'criminal damage', which holds minor penalties." Other legal advice that has been provided warns that if caught with a removed advert there could be a charge of theft. However, at present we are unaware of anyone facing prosecution for subvertising.

Resources

- Brandalism's Subvertising Guide- for all things bus stop related
- Inspiration on how to take over billboards

(Credit: Brandalism)

Banner Drops

You can find lots of details about organising Banner Drops here.