Welcome and Integration

How to welcome and involve new members in to your Local Group (or Community Group).

- Recruitment and new joiners
- Preparing for new volunteers
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Recruitment and new joiners

Getting new joiners to your local group and how XRUK supports this work.

Outreach

Resources can be found here - this information covers:

- outreach methods such as survey boards, street talks, stall, flyposting and more
- outreach training
- ordering posters, flyers or stickers

Join the Outreach Broadcast on Telegram. This is a 'broadcast' channel (no chat) listing upcoming training and outreach opportunities for UK-wide actions and new resources e.g. flyers/stickers etc.

Contact XRUK Outreach by email: actions.outreach@extinctionrebellion.uk or visit the Outreach Reception on Mattermost.

XRUK Rebel Ringers



Rebel Ringers make calls to new sign ups to the email list within 7 days of them joining. This work is known as 'phonebanking' and this team invite new joiners to engage in actions, events, volunteering opportunities. And, if they haven't already done so, to **join a Local Group near to them**.

To do this work the Rebel Ringers need info about local groups and their activities (see 'Make your Group Visible').

Phonebanking is crucial to mobilisation, and it's proven to work.

> Hi, I'm Robert from the Rebel Ringers team. Would you like to join us by spending an hour or two from home each week offering a warm welcome to new joiners? With some training, a script and on-going support, you'll be able to connect with people nearby, and help them find ways to get involved.
> All you will need is a mobile phone, and a computer or tablet. Join one of our **Monday evening sessions**, then after that you can then make calls flexibly at a time to suit you.

XRUK email welcome

People subscribe to the UK email list every week either via the website, local group outreach, local group maps on UK and Global websites etc. There are many routes to the UK list because it's a 'network' which all flows to a single big list called XRUK (more info here).

When someone new joins the UK list and they have given us their phone number, they will get called by the Rebel Ringers. But in addition **everyone new will get a series of welcome emails** .

These welcome emails vary depending on what we do, but currently (Feb 2025) they offer the following things:

- Invited to an Intro to XR Zoom
- Told about recent campaigns and actions and invited to a Get Involved session
- Introduced to the 'Event Map' based on their postcode
- Invited to volunteer for a role and linked to the Volunteer Website and again to the Get Involved session
- Recap of the above with additional links to the Local Group map and to donate.

Preparing for new volunteers

Why do we need new volunteers?

New volunteers are the lifeblood of every group

Every group needs the energy, skills, ideas, community connections, diversity and fresh perspective new volunteers bring.

Bringing new volunteers into our groups can be time-consuming and hard work and sometimes a new volunteer quickly leaves again. At times like these, it is tempting to think "oh, we'll just do it all ourselves".

Without a continual flow of new people, a group can end up consisting of experienced but very stretched people with no time to show others how to do things. Then, when one of those experienced people needs to step back, things can get even harder. A healthy group has a mix of people of all levels of experience, with a steady flow of newbies learning, moving on to more complex work, showing others how to do things and relieving the more experienced coordinators of work.

Setting the tone

Before you even start recruiting or doing outreach, think about how you will look after the people when they arrive. New people will need extra care and attention at the start. It is best that coordinating this work falls to someone who is not frazzled from doing a ton of other things, or is shared by the group. This is a job for **everyone** in the team.

Of course, no one can guarantee that your volunteers will stick with you, but there are some things you can do to make it more likely. At a People's Assembly, XR volunteers were asked why they stayed. These answers came up the most:-

- we felt **appreciated**
- we felt **part of a community**
- we thought XR was **effective**

And we really felt part of XR when:-

- we **got to know people**
- we **worked together** on something
- we **got to know XR**

- we **gained a role** in our team

So, drawing from this, the kinds of things which encourage people to keep coming back include:-

- a friendly, non-cliquey environment where group members avoid XR jargon, take the time to explain things, check understanding and listen to the views and experiences of the new person
- a named 'buddy' (or buddies) who will look after the new person, answer questions and help them settle in
- asking if the new person has anything they need to take part or feel comfortable and trying to meet their needs wherever possible (see also Supporting your New Volunteer and How do we genuinely welcome everyone?)
- a tangible project the whole group can work together on
- a role, or maybe some simple task to start with, for the new person
- connections to people, projects or training you know the new person will find interesting
- evidence of the impact of the things you are doing (e.g. getting your local council to declare a climate and ecological emergency, getting good press coverage, having a successful event where you bring in more people etc)

If you can provide these things, then you will have gone a long way to making a supportive and welcoming environment for the new vounteers who arrive in your group.

Ways of Working

We also recommend that you read the Ways of Working guide for how we relate to each other in all teams across the UK.

How do we genuinely welcome everyone?

To genuinely welcome everyone we must be inclusive

For guidance on Inclusivity in XR, start here.

More useful resources:

- Inclusivity-disability Resources Pack
- Neurodiverse and disabled rebels inclusion pages of the toolkit.

You can contact Disabled Rebels Network via Facebook, or you can email them at **wellbeing+drn@exinctionrebellion.uk**

Rare exceptions

There are a few rare cases where you might not be able to include someone, i.e. if their needs are beyond what you can reasonably meet, or if they risk causing harm to other people *(see 'Supporting your new volunteers')*.

What does an Integrator do?

It can be slightly overwhelming joining XR - so much to learn, so many new faces, all that XR jargon and even a new structure to work around.

And this is on top of the anger, frustration or desperation we feel because we face the global catastrophe of climate change, a result of systemic injustice and racial inequality, the effects of which are already being felt all over the world. It can be a lot to process.

And sometimes we forget to welcome new volunteers into XR, simply because we are often so involved in a project which is taking all our time and attention.

For this reason, we should have an Integrator in each of our teams and Local Groups (LGs) - to welcome new volunteers and to make sure that existing Rebels are finding their way on their journey through XR.

Check out the Rebellion Academy Module: Working Group roles, for some videos about being an Integrator.

Standard Integrator mandate

Purpose: to make sure that team/LG members are flourishing and productive and that the team/LG has members to fill its roles and support its workload.

Mandate:-

- inviting new members to join the team or LG roles;
- onboarding / inducting / orienting new members into the team/LG roles;
- keeping a list of team members up-to-date;
- requesting your group admin adds new members to the Hub, as required;
- checking in with team members about their fit with roles, projects and the team generally;
- suggesting improvements to who fills roles if necessary;
- if a transformative conflict process does not resolve an issue and if it is in the team's best interests, asking someone to leave the team *(rare circumstances)*; and
- for groups with a Volunteer Website account, managing the group account on the website, posting roles & dealing with role applications.

Different teams break this down differently (for example, you might have one person handling recruitment and a different one for onboarding) but someone will need to be responsible for each of the tasks listed above. Work out who will do what ahead of time so that everyone is clear what to expect.

Not got a team Integrator?

Then this is the first role to recruit for! You may think this person would need to know your team inside out in order to welcome others; but really the most important thing is for them to be friendly, empathetic and willing to learn as they go along. Sometimes, it even helps for the integrator to be relatively new so that they can use their own experience to help others. There are lots of resources on this toolkit to help them.

NB: If you haven't got an Integrator then it is the Internal Coordinator's job to do this work!

Cautionary note: *if you are using the volunteer website to recruit, it is important you get to know a new Integrator before giving them login details to your group account since this is a position of great trust and involves handling sensitive personal data.*

Onboarding new volunteers

Building Onboarding into your Team

We know that one of the main reasons that volunteers stay with XR is that they find a community with us. So how can we ensure that we are as welcoming to as many people, and as many different people, as possible?

The Job of Welcoming

It is an integrator's job to find, contact and induct new volunteers into the team. It is the whole team's job to welcome them.

Make Sure:-

1. a team member steps up to have a 1-1 chat with the new volunteer in their first week.
2. a team member steps up to be the new Volunteer's "Point Person" or "Buddy" for their first few weeks, that single port-of-call if the new volunteer has any questions*; and
3. the team invites the new voluntees to any social gatherings coming up or any activities they may wish to join.
   - (**This is especially important if you organise in multiple chats, ensuring they know what's happening**)

*A buddy is vital for helping new members to feel welcome and find their feet

The buddy's role/responsibility is:

- To make initial contact in the form of a friendly email, introducing yourself, possibly offering to meet for coffee or have a call
- To properly welcome them into XR by answering their questions, and allaying any fears they might have about getting more involved
- To generally be a friendly voice on the end of a phone and support them in finding their own place in XR

Some ideas for how a buddy can support a new XR volunteer:

- General meetups in a café to chat about their interests in XR, ask how they would like to be involved
- Inviting your buddy to a meeting that you are going to; you'll be the friendly person already there, so they won't have to go into a room of strangers
- Introducing your buddy to other XR people who are in areas that your buddy is interested in (art, media, outreach, performance actions)
- If they are ready to become involved, invite your buddy onto your local telegram group

As the Integrator, do think about how the local group will keep track of who is buddying whom.

New Volunteer in the Chat

When a new volunteer is added to your chat (Mattermost, Signal, Telegram...) make sure to say Hi and welcome them. Make sure they know the purpose of various chats and where they can ask for help.

A Volunteer's First Meeting

Do:-

1. ensure that the team has included their roles and pronouns in their screen names **or** start off with a round of names and role descriptions; and
2. have a least one person offer to stay behind to check in with the new Volunteer, see how they found their first meeting and if they have any questions.

Don't

1. use lots of acronyms and XR jargon! Try to have someone there to call people out on their jargon and ask them to define things.

Supporting your new Volunteers

Access needs

Find out about your new volunteer's access needs and any other ways they may need to be kept safe. These may include any disclosed disability that might affect their participation in our community (such as the use of assistive technologies to read emails and the web) as well as participation in events (such as physical access needs, mental-health issues and dietary or other invisible needs).

Gathering this information must always take account of someone's right not to disclose anything, as well as their need for proper support if they do disclose something.

You can find advice on ensuring that you support volunteers with access needs in the Access and Inclusion section of the toolkit.

Keeping each other safe

Any organisation needs to keep its members safe, and we need to make sure that we know if anyone in our community might be classed as vulnerable. If you find any concerns related to a volunteer (whether about their needs or about their potential impact on other volunteers), you may need to draw up a support plan so that volunteers can be protected from anyone who might harm them, either deliberately or accidentally. You should draw up a support plan in consultation with the volunteer who is its focus, and assure them that we want them to take part and are aiming to provide them with the support they need to do this safely.

Where else can volunteers get support?

Please signpost your New volunteers to the pages **Care and Respect** and **Inclusivity** in the **Intro to XR**

Please check your New volunteers have read these and understand the behaviour they are expected to follow.

Additional Guidance

Check out How we can support new activists.

Integrator Resources

Useful resources to help anyone who takes on the task of welcoming and onboarding new people to a local group.

Resources for new rebels:

- The first shelf of the Rebel Toolkit **Welcome to XR**
- Attending an online **'Intro to XR' talk or 'Get Involved' workshop**.
- For new rebels who cannot or don't want to join actions in person: **Digital Rebellion**

Resources for Integrators:

- **Local Group Building**
- To create your own automatic welcome email see slide 8 of the Integrator Training (linked above) use this **template**
- Link to the **UK Organism** (see how we're organised as a Self-Organising System)
- **How to hold a Welcome to XR Session for Local Groups**
- Action Network Training: **Training Request From** and guidance in the **Action Network for XR** book or **contact the Action Network Data Team**
- For any social media questions: **M&M Get Started**
- Check your groups details are on the: **Local Group Map** (Click the 'Add or Update' button on the bottom left if required)
- Outside of the UK? **XRGlobal map**
- GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation): **page on the Rebel Toolkit**

Case Studies:

- XR Midlands, flowchart and process: **Midlands Case Study**
- Haringey Spreadsheet - please copy and use as you wish: **Haringey Case Study**
- Oxford case study - how this local group runs and organises their integration: **Oxford Case Study**
- Connecting through sharing Life Stories: **Sharing Life Stories**

Integrator (Onboarder) training:

- The slides used in the **Integrator Training sessions for Local Groups** (need updating)

Contact and support

Most Nations and Regions have a volunteer called a 'Gardener' as part of the N/R team. If you don't know who that is, the please contact the Local and Grassroots support team:

- By email at **LGSupport@extinctionrebellion.uk**
- If you use Mattermost contact our: **LGS Reception**