

Growing Stronger: Extinction Rebellion UK's systems

There are three priority areas of focus in terms of growing stronger and improving XR UK's internal systems, our SOS, data strategy, and fundraising.

Extinction Rebellion has implemented a decentralised decision making system in the 'SOS' (Self-Organising System) which is resilient and effective. However, with many new rebels joining and many more expected to join the Extinction Rebellion fold over the next two years, there is a need to double down on its full use throughout the organisation. The Big One was a testament to the power of this way of working, it involved many dedicated activists working together in well coordinated central teams using our SOS.

Our Constitution and Self-Organising System, based on Holacracy, is not well enough understood within the movement or outside it. But it has proven to be a source of resilience and a way of ensuring transparency and fairness in how XR operates. Having a recognised framework, in which no one can be above the rules, enables us to be efficient without resorting to traditional hierarchy. It is a responsible approach to managing the needs of a mass movement. But these outcomes are only achieved when we use the system properly and fully. We are learning and iterating as we go, just as communities and societies are bound to.

The historical evidence is clear: successful civil disobedience movements are highly disciplined with robust organisational infrastructures. Achieving our demands is arguably attempting to do something more difficult than any movement in history. If we are serious about achieving our demands we need to get a lot more serious about how we organise.

Our Principles & Values commit us to using rule-based self-organising rather than hierarchical power structures or consensus. Our Constitution gives us this set of rules. In this emergency, we need to prioritise using our system to create the highly disciplined and robust organisational infrastructure we need to succeed.

To this end Extinction Rebellion will:

- Conduct a review of all mandates: both for Circles and for roles within them.
- Make [SOS training](#) to intermediate level and follow up SOS refresher training and coaching as a requirement for all Coordinators, and aim to offer training for all rebels who have not already been trained.
- Require all coordinators to mentor and develop other rebels with regard to the SOS.
- Develop a process that ensures all central Circle role holders and group coordinators are held accountable via their mandates and the election process.

- Establish and document ways of working agreements for each circle.
- Ensure all policies and mandates are published and visible to anyone in the Movement.
- Foster more cross-circle collaboration through the use of mature SOS.

Using our SOS means we all play by the same rules (explained in the XR UK Constitution) and no one is above those rules. To mitigate power it is required that all coordinators are elected. Local Groups in XR UK are represented through their regional or national coordinators who attend the Hive, and represent the voices of the movement in the centre. These Local Group coordinators should be elected at least every 6 months (people can be re-elected) to ensure transparency and accountability.

This structure gives the voices of the movement a place in the centre of the work we do. The logistical challenges of feedback exchange and consultation are managed through this way of working. Strong connections should be made between local groups and their coordinators to ensure that the voices of all rebels are heard.

The Hive should create a plan to create a dialogue with local groups in a sustained and meaningful way. The purpose of this should be to ensure rebels understand why having a disciplined structure is vital to our success, how and why decisions are delegated, how local groups are represented in the Hive, why it is important that local groups connect to their region or nation and how SOS serves the movement in all areas of our work.

Significant new work has been done in the movement in creating teams and resources to support those engaged in this challenging work and give them the skills they need, such as the Healthy Teams and Justice Dialogues projects.

A further important resource for all rebels is Rebel Support, held by the Hive, a robust, fair and confidential process for managing harmful behaviours.

The range of required training for coordinators of all XRUK circles, and UK regions and nations will be expanded to ensure everyone holding a coordination position has an understanding not just of how our movement works, but what makes it what it is. This will include implementation of SOS, our DNA and the understanding of XR's Third Demand, citizens' assemblies and deliberative democracy.

A strong, sustainable and unified structure, based on consent of the movement as represented in role and Circle mandates, is as critical to success as our Theory of Change and civil disobedience. XR UK will do more work in the areas of data capture, analysis and usage for growth. Data processes will be improved to better recruit, integrate and onboard new rebels.

The movement needs to be able to easily understand how many rebels are fully mobilised, how that number is growing in line with different activities undertaken, as well as ensure we have good data around our partner organisations as we build the community of civil resistance.

These types of data are essential to understanding how well we are doing against our strategy, and learning and adapting as we go. This type of information needs to be readily available to everyone in Extinction Rebellion and embedded into our organisational learning processes.

The 100 Days Campaign road-tested XR UK's new revitalised approach to data, with digital mobilisation key to reaching the big numbers we are aiming for. To make XR a mass movement we need to reach a much larger audience - and while not compromising on our theory of change, we need to speak to this new audience in a way that is relatable to them.

Not all new rebels can be recruited or integrated via local groups. For many the more effective way to achieve this is digitally - via social media, via email, and with smooth digital onboarding pathways. It is not good enough to have a more inclusive message but no marketing strategy or onboarding pathway. We need all of it, with detailed analytics for constant learning and iterating.

The last movement system that must be implemented more widely is our fundraising function. Currently fundraising is not sufficiently integrated across our platforms, nor with all groups. This essential function must be understood and undertaken by all XR UK groups, and woven throughout all of our work, at an early stages of planning.

The Fundraising Circle will be circulating their strategy soon, and will be working to develop advice, guidance and a training video to ensure all rebels have the tools they need.
