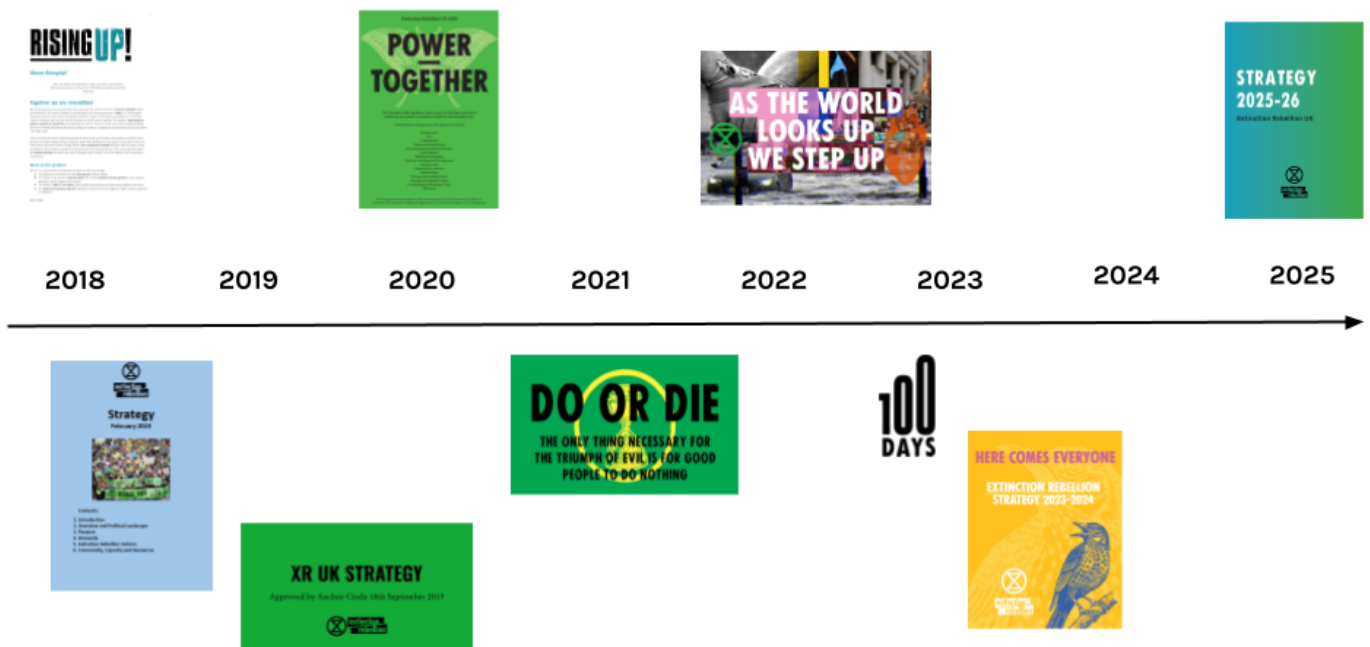


History of XRUK Strategy

#5 We value reflecting and learning

There has been significant learning and continuous improvement over time, consistently building on what came before. It's important not to lose sight of that progress. However, much of the knowledge and insights gained along the way haven't been widely known or shared. There's a clear need - and intention - to do better in sharing and communicating that information. It is part of our collective history, and we need to know what has come before in order to do better in the future.



In the beginning

More than six years of reflecting and learning has led us to where we are now.

Extinction Rebellion grew out of Rising Up! which is where our principles and values and other parts of our DNA, such as our theories of change, came from. Although not a strategy, it is a foundational document.

In February 2019 the first thing calling itself a strategy for XR was released, which set out how XR would catalyse the next phase of the rebellion and beyond.

Strategy and Stewardship Team

Following the April Rebellion, some of the co-founders wrote a strategy for the movement, and the movement did not accept this.

Which gave rise to the question: if the movement needed a strategy, who would design it and decide it?

A team called Strategy Stewardship was formed, which sat in the original Anchor Circle. Their job was not to create strategy but support the process for it.

The prevailing view at the time was that strategy should represent the collective views of the movement refined through tailored forms of convergent facilitation.

In practice, this process amounted to competing ideas for campaigns. It lacked any robust criteria to prove which would be most likely to achieve our aims.

There was no representation of the regions and nations, and no mechanism for ensuring all voices were heard.

2020 Strategy

The first UK strategy team was born!

This focused on creating a space for actual strategic analysis.

The worst and most difficult part was that they were expected to do all of the research, analysis, consultation and feedback of the movement and then filter all this information and put it all together, and write up the doc - in one month.

And then Covid and the XRUK Financial Crisis stopped play.

Strategy Assembly

Next time around, the model leant more into the consultative side that had been missing, and the result was the Strategy Assembly.

An assembly was created from across the movement by the Strategy Stewardship team. In some ways it was a great experience, and brought a genuine diversity of views and lived experience, but the process was deeply flawed.

The research and analysis still had to be done by a team. A small team was elected by the assembly and then expected to analyse, synthesise and write up the doc.

The pressure on this team was enormous, the assembly felt shut out, and everyone fell out. Badly. It ended up being a deeply harmful experience for a number of people involved.

2022 Strategy

In November 2021 the Hive mandated the first permanent Strategy Team, as a subcircle.

There was an open election for IC, and the team began to feel the benefit of moving away from the pressure of a looming deadline.

The 2022 XRUK Strategy had the space to really look at the landscape we were in, the reality of the movement and do a depth of work that had not had the space before.

This process was smoother than ever before, but overly biased towards personal views about what we should be doing.

Here Comes Everyone

This iteration really began to feel the benefits of being a permanent team. It had the space to ideate and explore in a way never given to a team before. Sitting in the Hive meant that there is ongoing input from the movement - updates and conversations from regions and nations EC provided consistent insights into the wider movement.

This team had a particular challenge, as it had to take the learnings from the 2022 Strategy and identify what it was that was missing from our strategy to inform the direction we are going. Doing the same thing again and hoping for different results was not an option. This team was made up of a mix of rebels, from co-founders to planners of some of our most defining actions.

However, the consultation element still wasn't right, and the learnings of this strategy were not embedded in the movement.

Strategy 2025-26

This team was the first team that was able to truly build on the work that had come before in the most meaningful sense. Here Comes Everyone opened doors that allowed for a depth of work that no previous strategy process has been able to commit to.

One of the key pieces of research carried out during this iteration was into community building, and this research was rooted in consultation. However that was not widely enough known, and may have supported the idea that there was no consultation.

The key issue faced, outside of the perception of consultation, is that the strategic journey over the past few years has not been well enough communicated. This has led to a lot of misunderstandings, and it is vital that work is carried out this time or there is the risk of the same cycle repeating.

Analysis and consultation

There are two core elements that XRUK continues to seek the right balance for.

There needs to be analysis, survey of literature and research. There also wants to be inputs from key stakeholders and experts, advice from friendly insiders - also, ideally advice from potentially not so friendly insiders.

Consultation is also necessary. It is important to understand the learnings, the strengths and weaknesses, issues like capacity, what works on the ground, and people's views. There is wisdom in what people say, even if there isn't a kind of formal methodology or process that will surface some kind of shiny, shiny golden data in terms of learnings.

Different strategy processes have emphasised different balances of the above, and sometimes run the risk of treating them as binary. It is vital that we embody reflection and learning and continue to develop and improve, rather than lose what we have already learned at moments of tension or discord.

Extinction Rebellion was created to bring about transformational, systemic change. That is not something that will be achieved if left to chance, or based on the view of the loudest voices, it needs to be approached with the appropriate level of thought and care that the work deserves.

Next steps

There is clear work for the Strategy Team to do. As well as continuing to improve and refine the process, and seeking a more meaningful and accepted way of consultation, there is a lot of work to be done on sharing the work done by the team so that it is accessible to a wider audience. This page is one of those pieces of work.

Further reading:

Here are links to the different strategies that have been produced by XRUK.

- [Rising Up!](#)
- [February 2019](#)
- [2019 Strategy - Strategy Stewardship](#)
- [Power Together](#)
- [Do or Die - Strategy Assembly](#)
- [2022 Strategy](#)
- [2023-24 Strategy - Here Comes Everyone](#)
- [2025-26 Strategy](#)

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