

# Action Design - How to Design an Action

All you need to know about action design so you can design your own action, deliver the training with slides and training notes.

- [Action Design - how to design your own action, and deliver a workshop](#)
- [Diversity & Inclusivity at Actions](#)
- [Banner Drop](#)
- [How to do a RECCE](#)

# Action Design - how to design your own action, and deliver a workshop

Here's all you need to design your own action and deliver an Action Design Workshop

[Action Design Workshop Slides](#)

[Action Design Training \(2 trainers for Zoom - 2 hours\)](#)

[More comprehensive Action Design Training](#)

[Action Design Training SLIDE version](#)

[Action Design Notes](#)

[Regenerative Action Cycle](#)

# Diversity & Inclusivity at Actions

## XR Principles on Diversity, Inclusivity & Accessibility

### Actions

Extinction Rebellion is committed to equality and to enabling people who have been marginalised by systemic oppression to act now and give their message in solidarity.

These guidelines are designed to be practical and manageable and will ensure diversity, inclusivity and accessibility are embedded in action planning and design.

A useful checklist '**Diversity & Inclusivity at Actions**' has been written by the Disabled Rebels Network and Protest Liason. This can be printed and used when considering your action.

- Cloud PDF version - [Diversity & Inclusivity at Actions](#)
- Google Doc version - [Diversity & Inclusivity at Actions](#)

Diversity and inclusivity is important all the time. This process is for action proposals but remember that diversity, accessibility and inclusivity is just as important for the planning meetings as it is for the action itself. For a comprehensive breakdown of considerations, please see [XR Principles of Inclusivity](#)

Actions need to be designed to be as inclusive as possible. While total inclusivity is impossible, actions should aim to be inclusive for the widest range of people possible.

Where an action may exclude people, for example climbing Big Ben to drop a banner, there are additional considerations such as necessity and proportionality. However, try not to make assumptions about individuals' limitations. Think of paralympian James Brown on top of a jet at City Airport.

The larger the action is, the greater the issue of diversity and inclusivity will be. With smaller actions, resources may be limited but the same issues must be considered and those affected should be consulted. If action planners receive requests from representatives of marginalised groups, they should be treated as a priority.

It is accepted that this is a dynamic document and, as Extinction Rebellion grows, more diversity and inclusivity considerations may become apparent and included as we respond to feedback from within and outside XR.

This process splits the actions into two types: inclusive actions; exclusionary actions. The process aims to help action planners consider possible barriers to marginalised groups starting with the process for inclusive actions and finally, on the last page, addressing exclusionary actions.

## **Actions that aim to be inclusive for all marginalised groups**

### **Inclusive Actions**

Covid 19 affects some groups of people disproportionately. The aim of inclusivity in planned actions is threatened if an activity presents (or is seen to present) a greater risk of infection to some groups of people. The following factors significantly increase risk:

- **Age** - older people are far more likely to become seriously ill than young people
- **Sex** - people assumed male at birth are at greater risk of becoming seriously ill than people assumed female at birth
- **Disability** - some people with disabilities are at higher risk
- **Ethnicity** - the virus presents a greater risk to some ethnic groups
- **Poverty** - people on lower incomes may be at greater risk

Any activity involving a risk of COVID-19 infection presents a greater danger to people in these groups whether as participants or within the wider community. Reducing risk of infection will increase the opportunities for everyone to participate. **When designing actions we therefore need to be conscious of the need to minimise the risk of COVID-19 infection. Not only will this protect rebels and the wider community, it will also help us optimise the protest and achieve our aim of inclusivity.**

**Actions which do not respect physical distancing and/or involve risk of arrest present an increased risk of infection of Covid-19.**

- Does the action plan include reasonable measures to reduce risk of infection for participants?
- Does the action plan include reasonable measures to reduce risk of infection for the general public both at the location and in wider society?
- Will the above measures be made clear so that rebels understand the level of risk to themselves and others?

### **Disability**

**Oppression** - There is a significant probability that disabled people have experienced discrimination and oppressive behaviour by the police and others. The process of being arrested can be particularly harrowing for those with disabilities who may have to rely on the police for greater support and care whilst in custody. Many, with good reason, will feel excluded if the action is designed to have a high risk of arrest.

#### **Mobility/Accessibility**

- Is the action accessible for those with limitations in mobility?
- Are meeting venues prior to the action accessible?
- Consider the location of the action, how do rebels get there if they use mobility aids, vehicles, wheelchairs and pushchairs for example. Can we offer support to transport people?
- What is the geography/accessibility of the action site?
- Can those with mobility issues move freely around the site?
- Can we provide ramps and people to support movement?
- Can you provide buddies who can dedicate themselves to supporting those with mobility issues?
- Are toilets for those with mobility aids available?
- Are toilets with hoists available?
- ZOOM meetings of 75 minutes or more should have a scheduled break and a group agreement reached on the length of the break (15 minutes is the recommended length).

#### **Hearing impaired**

- If there are speeches/meetings/training, have you provided a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter? (Additional sign language (not BSL) interpreters may be needed)
- Are there any rebels skilled in BSL that can assist with communication during meetings and at the action? Consider for all zoom meetings and training sessions.
- Contact **xr.bsl@protonmail** to request interpreters.
- Interpreters and lip readers need a break every 20 minutes
- Zoom has a **Live Transcript** functionality that you can switch on and it subtitles the meeting
- Have seats been reserved at the front to enable lip-reading and better acoustics?
- Are captions included on films?
- contact **xr.bsl@protonmail** to request interpreters
- Create audio files for mass action briefings (non-spicy)

#### **Vision Impaired**

- Are there any issues for vision impaired rebels travelling to meetings or the action site?

- Have you assessed the action site for hazards for the vision impaired, can we make them safe?
- Are venues accessible for guide dogs?
- Can you provide rebels in support of the partially sighted?
- Have quality contrasting colours been used in written material for those with colour blindness?

#### Neurodiversity

There is a wide range of considerations for neurodivergent people. **Offer help and be directed rather than asking about needs.**

- Noise can affect people negatively, waving hands instead of clapping for example may help. Has this been considered?
- Strobe lights can trigger epileptic episodes, will warnings be issued?
- Have colour schemes for signage and literature been considered for dyslexic rebels (avoid italics, underlining and use a sans serif font)?
- Can you allocate a buddy that is available to support neurodivergent people?
- Do you have any Mental Health professionals amongst your protest group that are willing to be available if needed?
- Are there quiet places for neurodivergent people to access if they get overwhelmed?

#### Ethnicity

**Oppression** - There is a significant probability that people of colour have experienced discrimination and oppressive behaviour by the police and others. Many, with good reason, have no confidence in the justice system. If the action is designed to have a high risk of arrest then this will tend to exclude people of colour, LGBTQ+ and disabled rebels.

**Covid 19 affects people of colour disproportionately.** Actions which do not respect physical distancing and/or involve risk of arrest present an increased risk of infection of Covid 19.

- If a mass arrest action or physically close action is deemed necessary and proportionate, will there be alternative supportive actions that allow people of increased risk of Covid 19 or people that are unwilling to be arrested, to share in the protest?
- **Good protest (police) liaison** can pacify police response and prevent escalation which could be uncomfortable for marginalised groups. However, police liaison rebels should not be overtly 'chummy' with police no matter how reasonable they are. This could be very uncomfortable for groups that have experienced police oppression to witness. In addition, police liaison should remind the police of their duty to behave without discrimination and facilitate protest.

- Is the action being protest (police) liaised?
- Will protest liaison be briefed regarding their behaviour at the action?
- Take care with banners and action messaging. Any reference to police, even in jest, is indicative of a privileged relationship with an institutionally racist organisation.
- Have action designers/artists been made aware of the issues with police and messaging?

#### **LGBTQ+**

There are parallel issues with ethnicity and disability in that there is a significant probability that LGBTQ+ people have experienced discrimination and oppressive behaviour by the police and others. Actions with a high risk of arrest may exclude LGBTQ+ people.

<https://transequality.org/issues/resources/participating-direct-actions-guide-transgender-people>

- It goes without saying that XR does not tolerate any discrimination or LGBTQ+ abuse but if it is not said and reinforced, then it is not positively challenged within our culture. Has this been spelt out within the action messaging?
- Are gender neutral toilets provided?
- Are there safe spaces for sleep outs?

#### **Families**

Families can be marginalised with children and be members of other marginalised groups. The exclusionary issues listed in this process can have a heightened effect on young rebels.

- Has the action considered the mobility of families with children and buggies? (Please see mobility above, consider meetings as well as the action itself)?
- Children can go missing temporarily. Has the action a site for lost children?
- What is the action policy for communicating details of lost children to the masses? (broadcast on Public Announcement, use Protest Liaison)?
- Do you have DBS checked adults to supervise children? (this is advisable not a legal obligation)?
- Do you have activities to educate children of all ages?
- Climate anxiety is a serious issue for young people, is wellbeing prepared to work with children?
- Has the content of speeches been considered for the suitability of children?
- Has the action site been assessed for traffic and hazards to child safety?

#### **Faiths**

Protection of the planet is important to all faiths and it is important to ensure that all feel welcome.

- Have you considered the day of the action clashing with days of worship/religious holidays?
- Has the action design included a multi-faith space for prayer?
- Will the action include vegan food (acceptable to most faiths)?
- A single muslim woman or orthodox jewish woman alone amongst men may feel excluded on religious grounds. Are female buddies available to chaperone?
- Are your meeting venues alcohol-free?

### **Actions that may exclude marginalised groups (exclusionary actions)**

#### **Exclusionary Actions**

It is accepted that the nature and requirements of some actions will exclude some rebels from taking part. It is important that this is recognised at the design stage and assessed to ensure that the exclusionary aspect is necessary, has been minimised and is deemed proportionate to the purpose of the action.

- **Are exclusionary elements necessary? (Are there other more inclusive ways to achieve the aim of the protest)**
- Who may find the action exclusionary?
- Has the element that is exclusionary been examined to ensure that adjustments cannot be made to address this and make it more inclusive?
- Are exclusionary elements proportionate?
- How is it proportionate to the aim of the action to have people excluded from it by design?
- Is the exclusionary action supported by other inclusive actions that allow everyone to share, feel valued and contribute towards the aim of the action?
- Have you discussed this with those rebels that may be excluded?

#### **XR Principles of Inclusivity**



# Banner Drop

[Art Blockers Image.jpg](#)  
Image not found or type unknown

## Banner Drop Briefing

(please read, particularly for banner drops in more inaccessible locations)

### Choosing the right location for your banner drop

When selecting the location where you will organize the banner drop, try to find a place that is:-

- Visible
- Accessible to the activists who will drop the banner
- 'Instagram-able' (should look nice/impressive on photos and videos)
- Safe.

Think about locations with high footfall and traffic. Banners will be dropped on the Friday morning - perhaps in locations where they may remain up for the week or longer.

Recce your location in advance at the time you wish to install and ensure it is safe to position a banner there.

If planning on installing your banner on a bridge over a road - depending on the type of banner you are using please ensure you have a safer Plan B site in mind if the wind is unsafe at your original location. Don't forget to reinforce all of the mounting holes in the banner fabric to tie your rope / zip ties to. You'd be surprised how easy a banner can rip once it's hung and the wind starts blowing. All it takes is extra stitching or clear duct-tape on the reverse.

If installing on road bridges consider the main direction of the traffic, for example around London, banners could be sited above arriving bound carriageways in the early morning as the public leave enter London for work.

### Briefing

Before the action can start, plan how many people you will need to hold / install the banner, and where each of them should stand / access the site. During COVID-19, these people should be in a bubble, and perhaps using their daily exercise to install the banner. Please see legal info below.

Ensure that people are prepared to talk to the police / security / public / press should they arrive and check the government website for guidelines during lockdown in advance of the action day.

Shifts - consider staying besides your banner so it does not get stolen and you can do something if there's a risk of it being damaged by the wind. Utilise this time for your daily exercise by the banner! Also consider moving your banner to another location to get more than one shot for social media, for instance if you have a site like an incinerator in your area you could do a shoot in front of it and then take your banner to a road bridge. If you have a strong team you can take your banner on a tour and leave it at a site where it gets most public views for an extended amount of time.

## Installation

Here's a link to a [handy instructional video for installing on motorway bridges](#)

A team of 3 - 4 is best for larger heavier banners. For a 10m mesh banner you will need 5-6 people. Vinyl banners should be rolled and mesh banners should be rolled from either end to the middle to make a scroll. On a 10m mesh banner you should fix the centre of the banner first and then roll out on both sides, fixing as you go.(see video above).

If installing above a road, wait for a gap in the traffic so that drivers aren't distracted by the installation. If the location is busy, consider installing very early in the morning. Be aware that wind increases significantly as large trucks pass under the bridge.

Stay beside your banner so it does not get stolen and you can do something if there's a risk of it being damaged by the wind.

If you're not 110% sure it will be safe, hang the banner somewhere else.

Use heavy duty plastic zip-ties and install the banner on the inside of the railings ensuring it is attached along the entire length of the top edge (mounting holes should be no more than 50cm apart for vinyl banners and 1m apart for mesh banners.) Wait for a gap in the traffic and flip the banner over. Fix the remaining edges of the banner in place.

Pedestrian footbridges are easier and safer than road bridges (especially if cycling to location).

Knots. If you don't want to use plastic zip ties, either get someone experienced with climbing or sailing knots or go online and learn a few basic knots such as a figure of 8, bowline and round-turn with two half-hitches. Practice somewhere safe first.

- Round turn and two half-hitches (for tying onto a pole or bar) [instructions](#)
- Bowline [instructions](#)
- 1 Figure of 8 loop (takes more rope, but easier than the bowline) [instructions](#)

Zip Ties are quicker and easier for novices - ensure they are heavy duty plastic zip-ties (you can get reusable ones).

## Safety

- If you are hanging your banner above a road on a bridge, safety is the highest consideration. If you're not 110% sure it will be safe, hang the banner somewhere else.
- Use mesh banners for safety in the wind. Banners must be hemmed with eyelets every 100cm and recommended to reinforce eyelets with heavy duty waterproof tape (Tesa extra Power Clear Duct Tape - Waterproof Repair Tape, 10 m x 50 mm or Gorilla Tape). Banners with eyelets from the Art Blockers will not need further reinforcement.
- Ensure all edges of the banner are fixed in place with secure fixings.
- Material strength. Whatever your banner is made from, be sure it is strong enough not to rip in the wind and that attachment points are also strong.
- If installing above a road avoid using padlocks or carabiners which could potentially be dropped. Mesh banners do not need weights when hung from road bridges.
- At the very least tie part of the banner on before you put it on the outside of the bridge. Get the knots at the top of the banner tied with some slack while the banner is sitting safely on the ground at your feet. That way if anything goes wrong or you need a rest, you're not stuck trying to hold the banner so it doesn't fall. Again, practice this somewhere safe.
- If the site allows, ideally install all the top fixings along the length of the banner on the inside of the railing and then flip the banner over to the outside. Ensure the fixings can easily take the weight of the banner and are not in a position that they will rub and wear in high winds.
- Fix the rest of the banner in place, ensuring all edges are secure.
- Wind on motorway bridges can be significant and increases as large vehicles pass underneath. If this makes fixing the banner difficult or you think it might rip, have a backup location in mind. Possibly on some railings besides a road, at ground level.
- Wear facemasks and observe social distancing at all times.

## Action Wellbeing

As we are in a lockdown we would advise to find a location where the banner can be dropped from and left, without supervision for as long as possible.

If you do have to stay beside your banner, ensure you are following the government COVID guidelines, take your daily exercise one after the other to check on the banner (particularly if there is risk of it being damaged by the wind). Please see the legal section below.

## Pack-down

Ensure that you use the same levels of safety when you remove your banner as you did when you installed it. If your banner is installed above a road, wait for a gap in the traffic to remove it - making sure nothing can fall into the road from the bridge.

Here's a link to a [handy instructional video](#)

## Legal Information

If creating a banner in your bubble and hanging a banner from a window at home, or a place that has agreed to hang the banner, there should not be any legal consequences of such actions.

This action is not a gathering or event.

We advise activists to consider the legal implications of staying with the banner during lockdown - there is a risk if dropping the banner and leaving it, that police may seek after you later too.

You will most likely receive a fine if caught by police, as well as other potential charges.

In terms of further potential criminal offences that could be committed by people involved in a Banner Drop action, there appear to be two potential ones that the police have used at protests involving banners in the recent past.

### The first is:

#### **Section 22A Road Traffic Act 1988 - Causing Danger to Road Users. The relevant part of this piece of legislation is:**

(1) A person is guilty of an offence if he intentionally and without lawful authority or reasonable cause -

(a) causes anything to be on or over a road, in such circumstances that it would be obvious to a reasonable person that to do so would be dangerous.

It goes on to define dangerous: "dangerous" refers to danger either of injury to any person while on or near a road, or of serious damage to property on or near a road; and in determining for the purposes of that subsection what would be obvious to a reasonable person in a particular case, regard shall be had not only to the circumstances of which he could be expected to be aware but also to any circumstances shown to have been within the knowledge of the accused.

So, the key here is to make 110% sure that there is no chance of the action being 'dangerous'. It seems pretty clear that if the banner drop is done safely, as illustrated in the previous sections, there would be no offence committed under this section of the Act. This is an either way offence, so will depend massively on where it is tried (magistrates or crown court). There is a chance of prison time for this (7yrs if tried in crown court).

### The second is Criminal Damage:

Criminal Damage is the “deliberate or reckless damage” of property without lawful excuse. The damage does not have to be permanent – people have been accused of this offense after using chalk on paving stones. It includes interfering with property in a manner that causes loss, which could include loss of profit (e.g. by setting off a fire alarm). Defence can often hinge on the ‘lawful excuse’ aspect of this offence. This offence is divided into two: Damage below or above £5,000.

If value of damage is under £5,000 Sentencing starting point: conditional discharge and compensation order (i.e. you may be asked to pay back the costs of cleaning and repair), tried in a Magistrates Court. Maximum sentence: custodial sentence of up to 3 months, £2,500 fine  
If value of damage is over £5,000 Sentencing starting point: a suspended sentence\* and compensation order, tried in either a Magistrates Court or Crown Court. Maximum sentence when tried in Magistrates Court: £5,000 fine and six month custodial sentence. Maximum sentence when tried in Crown Court: custodial sentence of up to 10 years.

\*A suspended prison sentence is the term given to a prison sentence imposed by the court, and then suspended (i.e. ‘delayed’). The court may decide to delay the prison sentence to allow the defendant a period of probation, or to undertake treatment for an addiction, or to meet conditions in the community. If the defendant breaches the terms of the suspended sentence, or commits another offence, they are likely to be sent to prison to serve the original prison term imposed.

### **Having items with intent to cause Criminal Damage**

Activists found on their way to an action with bolt-croppers have been charged with having items with intent to cause Criminal Damage. The most ridiculous arrests we’ve seen for this were for having permanent markers!

The other potential offence is from the old piece of common law legislation - Public Nuisance. Those involved in the Extinction Rebellion October 2019 rebellion will probably remember that this was the legislation the police used to try and disrupt our disruption! Here is a link to [an explanation of public nuisance](#)

In simple terms it is an unlawful act which interferes with the lives, comfort, property or common rights of the general public. In practice, it appears to be the fallback legislation that the police use if they can’t think of anything else to use to deal with issues!

Banner droppers should also do some research about their intended location for placing the banner to check whether there are any local byelaws that apply. For example, dropping a banner from a bridge over the river Thames in London would contravene byelaws that apply to the river. There may be similar byelaws in place for particular bridges, so it is best to check.

All those involved with the banner drop are advised to have completed a Know Your Rights training, understand and adhere to the principle of non-violent direct action, and can seek further information and advice through [Green and Black Cross](#)

# How to do a RECCE

## Action Design Space Workshop - How To Do Recces

RECCE is another term for reconnaissance.

At its most basic reconnaissance is preliminary surveying or research.

We try and avoid the term “reconnaissance” due to its military association, Recce is much softer and almost sounds FUN! (rec-reational!)

The success of every action is in the planning and the detail. As Benjamin Franklin said “If You Fail to Plan, You Are Planning to Fail”.

A good recce can make or break an action. A bad recce (or no recce) can potentially put people in danger.

There are three types of recce

- Route (if bringing in vehicles or a march)
- Zone (a specific target - junction, building, infrastructure)
- Area (wider context)

Sometimes you need to do Multiple Area Reconnaissance (all 3) - for example the Pink Table required a recce of the junction, a recce of the march route, a recce of the vehicle route and then a recce of the wider area to think about the impact of the occupation. It also required a night time recce to evaluate late night risk - partygoers, proximity to nightclubs, etc.

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## Why do we recce?

Essentially, a recce is important for us to plan how to execute an effective action. This means we don't want to just turn up on the day and hope for the best!

We want to... Gather information Look out for Problems Check police presence Identify accessibility needs Make a decision about going or not going! Help identify plan B or C Ensure safety Most importantly, to ensure success!

Sometimes seeing a location in the flesh will help trigger more ideas. It's sometimes easier to visualize the action once you're in the space, you have a better sense of scale.

Important note - every action needs a recce (of sorts).

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## Before the recce

Determine what kind of recce you need to do...

- Route (if bringing in vehicles or a march)
- Zone (a specific target - junction, building, infrastructure)
- Area (wider context)
- Multiple Area Reconnaissance (all 3)

Check the location via Google Maps and Google Streetview to get a feel for it.

## MAKE SURE YOU ARE USING A VPN WHEN USING GOOGLE!

Be security conscious

Use paper maps

### Advantages

- Good for identifying one way systems.
- Great for planning traffic and people movements- .
- Aerial views will give a holistic wider context.
- Identify access routes you're not aware of
- Great for evaluating wider impact on traffic.
- Great for assessing areas that need more investigation.
- Will help you create a cover story if needed.
- Great for getting around quickly.
- Perfect for finding local resources
- Good for checking the proximity of hospitals and fire stations and alternative routes
- Good for finding parking spots or possible holding locations

### Disadvantages

- Often out of date
- Site lines are different in summer and winter
- Buildings pop up and disappear
- Barriers pop up
- One-way systems change
- Inaccurate measurements
- It's hard to get a real sense of scale

Download an offline map app like [Guru maps](#) that allows you to drop pins and make notes on exact locations. Guru maps stores information locally on your phone and not in the cloud (unless you want it to).

Download [What 3 Words](#) to help share exact pinpoint locations

Download a AR measuring app like <http://armeasure.com> Newer iPhones have a standard AR measuring tool.

Use a laser measuring tool

If planning actions in Central London you can use [this website](#) to check traffic hotspots everyday at the time of your action at the location...

Plan a route if needed and make a note of it.

Make a list of everything you need to check on the recce.

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Who should do the recce? The three C's - Competent, Confident and Careful

- Important that the person doing the recce knows what kit will be entailed
  - Someone who has a good understanding of the plan
  - It's best to do a recce with another person. You get to discuss stuff, bounce off ideas, and they might see something that you would have missed.
  - A couple holding hands is less suspicious than two masked hoodlums
  - Someone people who can trust to get the job done
  - If in London probably best that "well known" activists don't do recce's due to FRT (facial recognition technology)
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What to take on your recce?

- Your checklist of what to check!
- Phone. (with a good camera with a wide angle lens, what three words, measuring tool)
- Laser measuring tools
- Something to make notes (phone is best as everyone is staring at phone 24/7)
- Decoy / disguise (binoculars, also useful)
- Torch

## **Be Incognito**

- Have a cover story ready in case someone asks you what you are doing.
  - Having a good reason for being there – birdwatching, inspecting the fire alarms, tourist.
  - Importance of clothing that blends into the environment – high vis, lanyards, clipboards etc – hiding in plain sight.
  - Looking at a phone pretending to be lost while looking around works?
  - Be careful! Don't be too obvious about what you are doing, don't point at stuff, and don't stare too much.
  - In London be aware of FR (facial recognition) technology
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**When to do your recce?**



- Doing a recce weeks before on the same weekday and at the same time the action will take place AND immediately before in case things change, like roadworks, weather, or police presence.
- So if your action is set to deploy on a Friday morning at 6am, you need to be there at 6am on ideally more than one Friday in advance of the action, and also at 5am on the day of the action. Cycle scout.
- Bear in mind security patrols likely to differ at weekends, different times of day etc. You may also be looking for shift changes in security personnel.
- If a recce is needed over an extended period of time (eg how many HGVs enter/leave a site in a 12 hour period) in an urban environment you can look for a cafe or pub with seats in the window, in a rural environment you could consider using some tech eg a spy cam hidden in a rock with wifi allows remote viewing.
- Whilst on the subject, there are other bits of tech that can be invaluable. We've used drones with cameras in the past to get accurate detailed photographs. You'll need to be mindful of detection, skills required and drone licenses - especially if near any no fly zones, for example airports.
- Other affordable tech is available - like spy glasses that record - though wouldn't be much use for me as I already need glasses, so suggest used by someone who doesn't!
- The last minute recce is invaluable in making the decision whether to go or not go... eg Farnborough airport one hour before, called off four separate teams plus media/streamer/photographer - postponed but ultimately very successful.

On going, live, on ground reconnaissance in the lead up to and during the action can be done via several people on site using a Whatsapp chat using live location to track vehicle positions. This can be used to communicate Plan B to all key players if needed!

During the action, especially longer actions/occupations, ongoing information gathering is essential for potential moves to a plan B or plan C, or to develop escalation of the action. A cover story that allows all areas access can be helpful, eg a photographer/live streamer, or a hand sanitiser dispenser.

Are police coming etc?

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### **Recce checklist / Things to consider**

- Traffic & Access
- How many entrances and exits are there to the junction?
- How does the traffic flow in and out?
- Is there a one way system?
- How wide are the roads? If possible pace them out, but always double check on Google Maps with its measuring tool or with your phone measuring app.
- Make notes with time stamps if you do a longer recce, this helps us get a feeling for the movements of people and vehicles: What time do workers arrive (if it's not 24hours), when are the busiest/quietest times etc.?
- What is the traffic flow like?

- Is it all buses, taxis and white van man!
- Is emergency access needed?
- Is there an alternative route for emergency services.
- Are there traffic lights nearby that can be used to stop traffic to create space to get into the road?
- How will you clear the junction of traffic?
- Are there any accessibility issues? Noise, obstructions, steps?
- Are gates locked? What time do they lock them?
- Can you get vehicles in?
- Can you get lock-ons in? How?
- How wide are the pavements?
- Don't use action vehicles to recce (ANPR - Automatic Number Plate Recognition)
- Are there transport links nearby, how are people going to get there?

## **Buildings and Infrastructure**

- Get a feel for it.
- Is there an opportunity to use the street furniture as part of the blockade?
- Do you see infrastructure like water supply boxes outside that could be useful to know about?
- Is there a way to get on to the roof of the building? How high is it roughly? Do you see any steps going up? Do you see a door/entrance onto the roof that could be accessed from inside?
- What physical security measures are in place? Barriers? Heras fencing? Electronic gates. How do staff get in?
- Where are the entrances and exits (don't muddle them up).
- Is there more than one entrance / exit!
- Are entrances and exits emergency exits?
- Are there any safety concerns for rebels (warning signs, dodgy looking infrastructure, moving vehicles)

## **Security/Police**

- Do you see any police? If so, how many?
- How close is the nearest police station?
- Do the police hang out in the same place everyday?
- Does the building have security? How close are they based? Could security intervene?
- Do you see any cameras? What area are they covering? At what point will they see us coming?
- How is the site secured? Fences, gates etc.? Do they go all around the place?
- Is the fence electric?
- Which direction will the police come from? Does it matter?
- Would street furniture obstruct police van access?

## **Beacons / Tripods**

- Is there a good drop-off location nearby that's secure?
- Is there a field/open space/dead road nearby to assemble?
- Time the way (slowly walking) from the drop-off to the assembly location and from there to the final location of the blockade. If there is more than one option, time all of them! Decide later.
- Check if there are any obstacles we would have to lift the beacon over. How high are they?
- Are the paths wide enough to carry beacons through?
- In the location where the beacons will stand, are there any solid objects you could tie down to in case of high winds?

## **Workers & Community**

- What workers and businesses will be impacted by your action?
- In what ways would the local community be affected if we block roads / make noise / set-up camp.
- Are there hospitals / fire station nearby, will you be blocking emergency services.
- If your action is staying overnight, are drunk people around?
- Where could you do outreach?

## **Miscellaneous**

- How close is the closest police station? (and nearest police cells)
- Where will you take the "money shot" from (photography)?
- Is there an aerial view once you're in place?
- How exposed to the weather (heavy winds/rain) would the action be?
- Are there any health and safety issues?
- If camping, what might disturb you?
- Are there good vantage points for coordinators to observe from?
- Where's the nearest cafe for internet, press, meetings?
- Where's the nearest toilets, shops, facilities?
- Are there muster/rally points nearby?
- Where can you conceal infrastructure nearby?
- Some actions require tide times and weather reports - does yours?
- Space - is the area big enough for all the rebels!
- How does your chosen location fit with the narrative?
- Does your location maximise publicity?
- Does it cause effective disruption if that is your aim? Who are you disrupting?
- Will disruption be to influential people more than public; is it an influential area?
- Which parts of the area / terrain are public, or private, or a highway?
- Are you blocking any emergency service access, e.g. near to a hospital or fire- station? (Don't!)
- Do you need to time any distances (walking or driving)?

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## **After you Recce**

- Don't let too much time pass before processing your collecting information.
- Look at your notes.
- Double-check your findings with Google Maps & Streetview.
- Look at the land registry to find out who owns the lands – this will determine some likely charges (e. g. trespass vs. obstruction of the highway).
- What legal implications will the location incur? Is there a byelaw in place?
- What different criminal charges could there be depending on exactly where it happens?
- Check in with your team to discuss the plans.
- Sense check everything... Twice... maybe three times
- Check the internet to see if any other protests, events, road closures, marathons, etc are happening the same day as your action.

## **Recce Packs/Briefing Docs**

- Create a briefing document if needed.
- Maybe create a map with important information on it. (traffic flow, exact locations, etc)
- Brief your rebels.
- Make sure everyone is clear.

Some aligned actions might require a recce pack; 404 is a good example. A recce pack was pulled together to advise on the areas that should be investigated at each specific Amazon depot. This pack helps ensure that those doing the visit cover all the appropriate requirements.

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## **Case Study**

### [Ascot Racecourse Anecdotal Observations](#)

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## **Links**

### [Information on security staff whose job is to identify threats from activists](#)

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## **Recce links, further reading and resources**

### [Facial Recognition Technology](#)

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## **General resources**

### [Action Resources Document](#)

### [Suggested Reading](#)