

How can strategy best serve me and the wider movement?

Date: 16th December 2020

Context

The movement is currently going through the process of building our next strategy to bring us into the new year. The strategy process itself can be followed [in this book](#). This assembly aims to get rebels talking about strategy and inform those sitting on the UKSA as to the reality of opinions across the movement.

Input

The input for this session just went through a few definitions of **strategy** and **tactics** to orient the assembly on what specifically we are talking about. We also touched on where we currently are in term of the Strategy Process.

Strategy Definitions

- **Strategy** - Our long term goals and how we aim to achieve them, a big picture framework to help us design our campaigns and actions.
- **Tactics** - Methods used to achieve strategic goals. Types of actions eg. Dialogues, hunger strikes, debt strikes, blocking roads, poster campaigns.
- **Intermediate / Overarching Strategic Goal** - The overarching strategic goal is the aim of the strategy, our success criteria, what we plan to achieve. Intermediate strategic goals are the steps we take to get there.
- **Vision** - An expression of our overall purpose and ambition, what the world will be like when we win, an expression that unifies the movement and inspires others by its moral appeal.

Principles of Strategy

These are personal and vary between groups and organisations, what are your principles? The following are some of the principles used in the past to form XR strategy.

- **Visionary** - Needs to go the distance & inspire.
- **Measurable** - We need to be able to measure our successes .
- **Dynamic** - Needs to be adaptable to changing circumstances.
- **Unifying** - Needs to bring rebels together doing different things for common purpose.
- **Inclusive** - Needs to be informed by and include the diversity of our rebels.
- **Regenerative** - Needs to have space for our vulnerability and humanity.
- **Reflective** - Needs to inform itself and evolve.

Where we Are

There are currently two things you may have come across around strategy.

- **The Actions Strategy Update**, which is a document produced by the Actions circle to help fill the gap between now and when the 2021 Strategy emerges, at which point it will be amended if necessary to complement the 2021 Strategy.
- **UKSA (Strategy Assembly)** which is the group of representatives from across the movement who are coming together to review, discuss and produce our next movement wide strategy. More information on the UKSA and their progress can be found on the Toolkit.

These are both strategies being worked on, they don't necessarily contradict each other, rather one is more focused on a single aspect of XR. This gives us an interesting example of how Movement wide strategy can work for us.

An action strategy can lay out a path for doing actions which furthers the movement wide strategy. Similarly a nation or region could produce a strategy for how they plan to use their resources to further the movement wide strategic goals.

Question

- **How might the strategy best serve me and the wider movement?**
 - What do you need from a strategy in terms of content and format?
 - What would a strategy have to look like for you to be able to use it in your group?

Feedback

There was overwhelmingly aligned feedback from the breakout groups. Many important points came up and were repeated by several groups. Below is a summary of the recurring themes.

Main Points

These themes came up repeatedly by the vast majority of the Breakout Groups.

- **Clear Strategic Goals** - We need clear and achievable goals, activities which link clearly to an outcome and how our actions further the whole.
- **Sharing of Ideas between Local Groups** - We need a central place to share our successes, plans and information to use against our local institutions. How do we capture the amazing work we do?
- **Unified Local Coordination** - A real desire for LG to coordinate actions and work together on short term goals.
- **Connection to daily reality** - Connecting the CEE to people's everyday struggles (Covid, housing crisis, economic / financial situation, food poverty, flooding etc) People are in a survival mindset.
- **Clear Timeline** - We need time to prepare for coordinated actions, whether there is an action plan or just a shared target on one day for LGs to get creative around.
- **Movement of Movements** - We want to coordinate with local branches of other organisations, connect to existing direct action networks, get talking on high streets to as many people as we can and build a local MoM.
- **Local Connections** - Connecting to Local issues, targetting local issues which speak to the wider problems. Bringing Climate Emergency Centres to engage locally and help educate / support / reskill the community.

Some Other Points on the Content of Strategy

- **Positive Goals** - Desire to have a focus on things we are **for**, some positive campaigns and pushing of a positive vision.
- **Priorities** - We can't go in every direction at once, we need some priorities, where our energy can have the most impact, target those who cause the greatest harm to our wellbeing.
- **Diversity and Inclusion** - We **have** to get a range of people with us if we are going to influence the government, we need to be more inclusive of people of colour and the working class.
- **Covid Recovery** - linking Covid and the recovery to the CEE with a focus on the government as they have the power to influence funding and reskill people. We need the government to support people through this crisis.
- **Media Focus** - need to get the CEE in the media every day, the BBC is failing us. We need educational programming on the crisis.
- **International Links** - Highlight the impacts of our actions on international conditions, link what is happening here to the global stage. How can the UK use our privilege?

Some Points on the Delivery of a Strategy

- **Ease of Use** - we want a concise, easy to understand strategy with clear visuals and direction on how we can apply it. Guidance on how to frame and build an action to further the strategic goals.
- **Simplicity** - Simple pathways of how an action furthers the strategy, short and simple. We do X, which will cause Y which helps us achieve Z. How do our goals link together?

- **Clarity of Thinking** - Delivered in such a way that is simply connects to the theory. We want to understand how our actions are contributing to the greater whole, so we can write our messaging and outreach to reflect this.
- **Many Formats** - Several accessible formats to engage with (BSL, Kids version, Live Zoom Q&As, Video, Written)

Other things mentioned

- **Systemic Issues** - Help with the clarity of the systemic issues we are facing (e.g. the housing crisis does not equal too few houses)
 - **Communications Overwhelm** - there are too many communications platforms, hard to know what is important or urgent.
 - **Ready-made Actions** - It would be helpful for the smaller LGs to receive almost fully formed action plans in the knowledge that many small LGs will be doing it together.
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Actions

Communities heard the feedback here and will at minimum take the following actions:

- Ensure that these ideas are heard by the UK Strategy Assembly as they piece together the next strategy for XRUK.
 - **Update 11/1/21:** The Harvest document and this summary were shared with the UKSA and we can see some of the points we made pop up in their [criteria document](#).
- Ensure that the feedback around Action Plans and further guidance on linking action plans to strategic goals is heard by Actions Circle.
- We will do a big push on use of the Toolkit in the new year, and support Local Groups in using it to share their information, action plans and outreach materials with each other.
 - If anyone is interested in helping us do this well please email us at xrcommunities@gmail.com.
- Communities will work with the UKSA once they have a strategy written to ensure it is delivered in as many ways as possible, including Q&A sessions and spaces for rebels to come together to discuss it.
 - **Update 21/1/21:** Communities have offered the UKSA to help deliver the strategy to the movement in accessible and interactive formats. The offerings can be found [Here](#). Communities hope to work further with the [Strategy Format Team](#) to follow through on this.

Useful Links

Some of the links below answer specific questions that came up during the assembly. Hopefully they will be of use!

- [The UK Strategy Process](#)
 - [Info on Citizens Assemblies and the Citizens' Assembly Working Group](#)
 - [The Rebel Toolkit!](#)
 - [Buddying New Rebels](#)
 - [XR BSL Team - xr.bsl@protonmail.com](mailto:xr.bsl@protonmail.com)
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