

# Extinction Rebellion and Attenborough put climate in spotlight

News bulletins are leading on global warming and the BBC is shedding some of its 'balance'

Caroline Davies

Fri 19 Apr 2019 06.00 BST

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Extinction Rebellion protesters and police on Waterloo Bridge in London. Photograph: Brais G Rouco/Barcroft Media

With Extinction Rebellion making headlines and Sir David Attenborough broadcasting [The Facts](#) on BBC One, climate change has gone mainstream this Easter. A nation has been watching protesters glue themselves to trains, turn London's roads into gardens and [actively invite arrest in their hundreds](#).

As a media strategy it is working. How did glueing yourself to a train highlight climate change, Radio 4's Today presenter Nick Robinson asked Dr Gail Bradbrook, an [Extinction Rebellion](#) co-founder. "It gets you on the Today programme," she replied.

For [Chris Packham](#), an environmental campaigner and BBC presenter, this is welcome progress, marking a long-awaited moment when news bulletins lead daily on global warming.

He, like others, has detected a recent change in the BBC's coverage. Attenborough's much heralded programme, broadcast on Thursday, was part of a series of hard-hitting documentaries by the corporation, along with a forthcoming programme on human population growth presented by Packham. "They [the BBC] are certainly making sure they are moving away from criticism levelled at them in the last few years of only showing a rose-tinted view of the natural world," Packham said.

Demonstrators dancing down Oxford Street or planting shrubbery on Waterloo Bridge attract headlines, which in turn influence programme-makers, he believes. "So I think there is a change, yes. The [BBC](#) has got its fingers on the pulse."

From the start Extinction Rebellion has made it easy for the media. Through its "Declaration of Rebellion" on Halloween, its "Blood of our Children" stunt in Downing Street and strip protest in the Houses of Parliament, it has made and nurtured key contacts at media organisations in the buildup to this week's direct action.



Climate protesters climb on top of train at Canary Wharf – video

Another co-founder, Roger Hallam, has been clear that the strategy of public disruption is heavily influenced by Saul Alinsky, the US community organiser who wrote *Rules for Radicals*, and Martin Luther King's civil rights movement. "The essential element here is disruption. Without

disruption, no one is going to give you their eyeballs," he has said.

That means accepting negative coverage in some parts of the media, such as hostile front-page stories in the Daily Telegraph and Daily Mail on Thursday. "Obviously when you shut down central London for several days, you are going to attract attention," said Howard Rees, one of Extinction Rebellion's media organisers. "Getting media attention is very important."

Rees said media reaction had been "mixed but fairly positive". There had been some negative commentary, such as describing protesters as "sanctimonious eco-zealots" and "prancing hippies" whose direct action was merely a "tawdry New Age circus". "It gives everyone a really good laugh because it is so totally inaccurate," Rees said.

The protesters were pleased with the mainstream broadcast coverage, he said. "The BBC often does its best to try and ignore the issue and us, so we are pleased to see we have managed to have a bit of a breakthrough there."

Twice in three years complaints have been upheld over Today programme interviews with the climate change sceptic Nigel Lawson for failing to challenge his views more robustly. In September last year the BBC's director of news and current affairs, Fran Unsworth, accepted the corporation had got its coverage of climate change "**wrong too often**" and told staff: "You do not need a 'denier' to balance the debate."

In October Radio 4's The World Tonight and BBC World Service's Newshour announced they would be covering climate change at least once a week, every week.



'If this is what it takes': London reacts to the Extinction Rebellion 'shutdown' – video

Rosie Rogers, a senior climate campaigner for Greenpeace UK, said: "The BBC's slightly odd decision to maintain an even balance between climate science and conspiracy theory seems to have finally been overturned, and that's extremely welcome. We do understand the pressure they have been under from the denial lobby, but science is not a political ideology and should not be treated as one."

Richard Black, a former BBC environment correspondent and the author of Denied: the Rise and Fall of Climate Contrarianism, said the pressure exerted on the broadcaster by contrarians had been "quite extreme at times" in the past.

Much of the mainstream media was now having to take the issue seriously, he said, "because the facts have changed. And in the end, if you want to be credible you have to go with the facts."

Negative commentary about Extinction Rebellion would not affect morale, said Black, the director of the Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit thinktank. "They have got one central aim, which it to get people talking about climate change. And on the basis of what we have seen, they have been successful in that. Everyone in the media is talking about them. Politicians are talking about them."

He added: "I think, though, what is probably more profound for the future is not Extinction Rebellion but **the schoolchildren's strike**, which is a very organic movement, utterly driven by kids for kids."

## Extinction Rebellion keep control of major London sites into a third day

**TfL turns off wifi on tube in bid to thwart group's plans to disrupt public transport network**

**Matthew Taylor, Damien Gayle and Libby Brooks**

Wed 17 Apr 2019 10.30 BST

First published on Tue 16 Apr 2019 18.45 BST



'If this is what it takes': London reacts to the Extinction Rebellion 'shutdown' – video

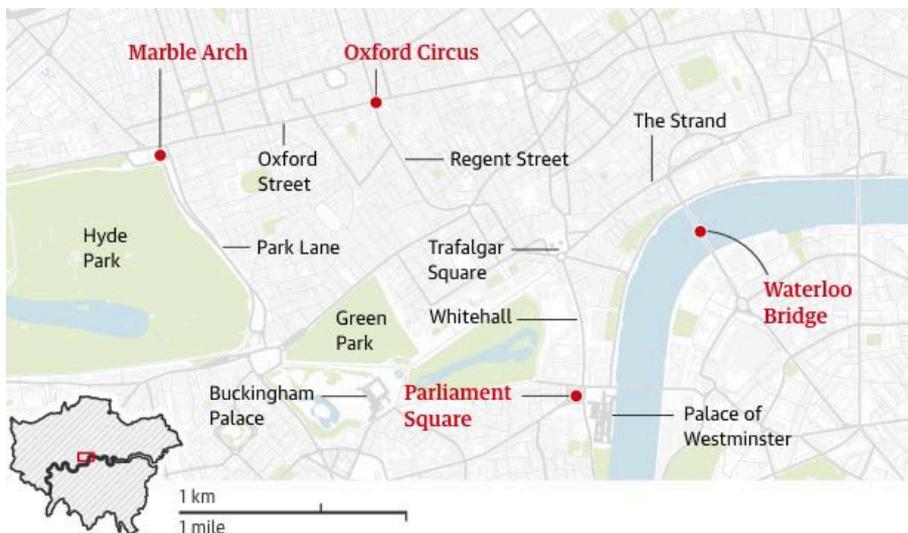
Climate activists have kept control of four sites in **London** for a second night, with police saying they have caused “serious disruption” affecting half a million people in the city.

After the **Extinction Rebellion** activist group threatened to disrupt the city’s public transport network on Wednesday, Transport for London disabled wifi on the underground at the request of the British Transport Police.

Thousands of people have taken part in the civil disobedience protests since Monday, blockading four landmarks in the capital in an attempt to force the government to take action on the escalating climate crisis.

On Wednesday morning, the four sites – Marble Arch, Waterloo Bridge, Parliament Square and Oxford Circus – remained under the control of protesters, causing delays and diversions in the surrounding areas.

“We’re working closely with the police to manage the impact of disruption to London’s transport network,” a TfL spokesperson said. “Customer wifi in underground stations has been temporarily switched off. We will restore access as soon as we are able to do so.”



Passengers were not informed about the decision to turn off the network, and many travellers wrongly attributed the disruption to conventional technical faults.

Disabling public communications networks is an increasingly common tactic used in policing disruption across the world. Almost eight years ago, San Francisco’s Bart transit system turned off the mobile phone service across the network to prevent a similar campaign aimed at stopping trains in protest at the killing of a man by Bart police. That decision was criticised by the American Civil Liberties Union, which said it was reminiscent of censorship in the Middle East.

## Thousands block roads in Extinction Rebellion protests across London

Climate group occupies major landmarks in campaign that could last several days

**Tell us if you are taking part**

**Matthew Taylor and Damien Gayle**

Mon 15 Apr 2019 18.59 BST

First published on Mon 15 Apr 2019 09.58 BST



Extinction Rebellion activists cause disruption across London in climate change protests – video

Thousands of people have blocked well-known landmarks including Waterloo Bridge in central London, bringing widespread disruption to the capital in a “climate rebellion” that organisers say could last several days.

Parents and their children joined scientists, teachers, long-term environmentalists and other protesters both young and old to occupy major junctions and demand urgent action over the escalating ecological crisis.

The protests are part of a global campaign organised by the British climate group **Extinction Rebellion**, with demonstrations planned in 80 cities across 33 countries in the coming days.

The group is calling on the UK government to **reduce carbon emissions** to zero by 2025 and establish a citizens’ assembly to devise an emergency plan of action to tackle climate breakdown and biodiversity loss.



Protesters on Waterloo Bridge. Photograph: Jonathan Brady/PA

By mid-afternoon five London landmarks – Waterloo Bridge, Marble Arch, Parliament Square, Oxford Circus and Piccadilly Circus – had been blocked by thousands of protesters.

Organisers said they hoped to hold the first four of those venues round the clock over the coming days with a temporary camp established at Marble Arch, causing widespread disruption in the capital.

However, as darkness fell on Waterloo Bridge on Monday night, police moved in and began to arrest protesters still blocking the crossing. A spokesperson for **Extinction Rebellion** said there were several hundred people still occupying the bridge, adding that “morale was high” and a cheer went up every time someone was taken away by the police.

The arrests came after the Metropolitan police issued an order under section 14 of the Public Order Act, which allows conditions to be imposed on “public processions” and “public assemblies”. The order restricted the protesters to the area around Marble Arch. A police officer on the bridge said that the Met could impose limits on assembly if they felt there was a serious risk of disruption or to public order. “Obviously, sitting down on Waterloo Bridge is a serious disruption to the community,” he said.

Police mingled more or less freely with the crowd and around several gazebos, potted plants and trees, and a mobile stage that was hosting a choir. “They are taking people incredibly slowly,” said one protest organiser. “It could take all night.”

At about 10pm police became anxious when several dozen more people arrived to reinforce the numbers on the bridge. By midnight there had

been around 50 arrests linked to the climate protests.

Earlier **Roger Hallam**, one of the movement's leaders, said nothing like this had been seen on the streets of London for decades. "What's amazing about this is for 30 years you have just had that closing up of public space – 'you can't do this, you can't do that, you've got to finish then'.

"Suddenly what Extinction Rebellion has done is actually say: 'we are doing this.' And the state is so weak through austerity that they can't stop us."

The campaign cites the civil rights and suffragette movements as inspiration and is backed by hundreds of scientists and academics, including the former archbishop of Canterbury **Rowan Williams**.

Williams, who part in Monday's protest, said at a meditation the night before that humans had declared war on nature: "We are here tonight to declare that we do not wish to be at war. We wish to make peace with ourselves by making peace with our neighbour Earth and with our God," he said.



Action or Extinction? Environmental activists take to the streets

The group wrote to the prime minister, Theresa May, on Monday outlining their demands and asking for talks. In the letter they warned they would escalate their disruptive actions over the coming days and weeks unless the government acts.

"Make no mistake, people are already dying," the letter said. "In the majority world, indigenous communities are now on the brink of extinction. This crisis is only going to get worse ... prime minister, you cannot ignore this crisis any longer. We must act now."

At Waterloo Bridge before the arrests, protesters blocked the roads and turned the crossing into an impromptu **garden bridge**, with people bringing trees, flowers and setting up a miniature skate park and stage.

At Oxford Circus thousands of protesters danced to live music at the normally busy junction. A lifesized model of a boat was parked in the middle of the crossing with the slogan Tell the Truth emblazoned on the side. At nearby Piccadilly Circus the youth section of **Extinction Rebellion** held a sit-down protest, writing messages in chalk on the pavement.

Organisers hope the rebellion will last for several days and say its success depends on the number of people willing to occupy the sites in the days and nights ahead.



Traffic queues behind protesters in a road near Marble Arch. Photograph: Daniel Leal-Olivas/AFP/Getty Images

Laura Sorensen, a retired teacher who travelled from Somerset to join the protests, was one of thousands who gathered on Waterloo Bridge in the sunshine.

She said: "I am so worried about what's happening to the planet. We are on a knife-edge now and I felt strongly that I needed to get out and show myself, rather than just talk about it in the pub."

Sorensen said she had not previously been active in the environment movement but that as a child she had been given a love of nature by her parents. "I see this disaster unfolding all around me ... it is terrifying and the government have done nothing despite all the warnings, so we have to act now."

Trey Taylor, 19, was with two friends in Piccadilly Circus. He said he felt compelled to act when he realised the scale of the emergency.

"We are facing environmental breakdown and nothing remotely proportionate is being done about it ... when you look at the facts this is happening now and the government response is utterly woeful."

In Parliament Square about 2,000 people gathered under a sea of flags, placards and banners. From an octagonal stage erected on the green for speakers, Jamie Kelsey Fry, the contributing editor for New Internationalist magazine, said: "This is not a political movement, this is a movement of humanity. We are all backgrounds, all ages, all races, bound together in one wish, one dream, which is that we will have a good, decent, loving future, for generations to come."



Parliament Square was another landmark occupied on Monday. Photograph: Kirsty Wigglesworth/AP

Five protesters were arrested for suspected criminal damage when they staged a demonstration at Shell's headquarters. A glass revolving door was shattered and hundreds of passersby watched as two activists climbed above the entrance, writing "Shell knew" and "Shell knows" on the building.

At Marble Arch hundreds of people sat in the sun, listening to bands playing from an open-sided truck.

#### Damien Gayle

(@damiengayle)

Simon Bramwell, who was glued to a revolving door at @Shell, said: "Shell has known about the impact the fossil fuel industry is having on our planet for decades. They've done nothing but deceive, lie and undermine any efforts at transition to renewables." [#extinctionrebellionpic.twitter.com/efAb6QO7CO](https://twitter.com/efAb6QO7CO)

April 15, 2019

Police walked among protesters, many of whom had come with their children, while groups of activists at the periphery blocked the various roads feeding into what is usually one of London's busiest junctions.

Alex Armitage, an NHS doctor, had been drafted in as a spokesperson for the Marble Arch group. He said he hoped the police could be brought on side. "Eventually if this is going to work, if we are going to have the massive change in the economy that we need to protect ourselves from climate change, we are going to need the police to be unwilling or unable to restore order, and then the government has no option but to negotiate," he said. "It all seems really grandiose – but so is the scale of the problem facing us."

A number of major roads in the capital were brought to a standstill with roads gridlocked in surrounding streets. The AA said the disruption had been significant.

Police on Waterloo Bridge said there were no plans to move protesters on for the time being. One officer said: "It's been very peaceful so far. Everyone has been really pleasant. The only grief we've had is from passing motorists shouting at them to 'get a job' – that's about as exciting as it's got."

The events in London were the biggest demonstrations but there were smaller protests in other cities around the world.

## Extinction Rebellion want to get

# arrested to fight climate change

By Stephanie Bailey, CNN

Updated 1345 GMT (2145 HKT) April 15, 2019



An Extinction Rebellion protester blocking Blackfriars Bridge, in London, November 2018.

**London (CNN)** Earlier this month a group of climate change activists [stripped down](#) to their underwear in British parliament and glued their hands to the glass of the House of Commons' public gallery.

Why? To get arrested.

[Extinction Rebellion](#), a grassroots environmental group based in the UK, is responsible for a series of stunts that deliberately break the law to highlight the threat of climate change.



Extinction Rebellion protesters begin blockade of central London

Since launching last year they have caused disruption by holding a "Funeral for our Future" outside Buckingham Palace, which led to 14 arrests, [poured](#) 200 liters of fake blood outside Downing Street, and brought London to a standstill by [shutting down](#) five bridges.

So far Extinction Rebellion has counted 222 arrests -- and thousands have declared they are willing to be arrested, or even go to prison, to demand action on climate change.

## Method to the madness

Extinction Rebellion claims their actions are [based](#) on research into how to use "non-violent civil disobedience to achieve radical change."



An Extinction Rebellion protester, London, November 2018

They estimate that significant numbers of people will have to get arrested and cause disruption for the government to pay attention to their demands. These include the UK government declaring a climate change emergency, reducing greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2025 and starting a citizen's assembly.

"People making decisions have to pay attention to a mass of people that come out on to the streets to demand action in the face of this crisis we are in," said Roman Paluch-Machnik, an Extinction Rebellion activist who has been arrested more than once.

"You put the police in a dilemma," explained Nuala Gathercole Lam, another protester. "If you have got thousands of people refusing to move, they either have to let you do it, which is hugely economically disruptive, or they have to arrest you."

According to the group, research shows that non-violent uprisings involving 3.5% of the public participating in acts of civil disobedience force a political response because they cannot be ignored.

"Every non-violent uprising since 1900, if it achieves that threshold, succeeds in its aims," said Paluch-Machnik. "One of our main principles is to get this 3.5% mobilized."

That would need about 2 million people to get involved in the UK.

## Willing to get arrested

Almost 10,000 people worldwide have signed up as "willing to get arrested," as of April 8, 2019, according to the group. Around 3,000 are based in the UK.

Of those people, over 80% are also "willing to go to prison." The group holds [prison workshops](#) and training sessions to prepare people for what to do if they end up at a police station.



Pictured, a protest outside Downing Street, March 2019.

"Nothing has been achieved after 30 years of regular environmental campaign," said Paluch-Machnik. "People are so motivated by what is happening right now because there is not really another option."

"I've always been very worried about continuous news about the government not addressing the situation," said Alanna Byrne, an activist for Extinction Rebellion. "I felt very isolated in the way that I felt."

Along with 25 others, Paluch-Machnik, Lam and Byrne have quit their jobs to work for Extinction Rebellion full time.

## How far are you willing to go to demand action?

Since the [UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#) (IPCC) [warned](#) last year that the planet only has 11 years before it reaches disastrous levels of global warming, Extinction Rebellion isn't the only group to launch radical climate activism.



Extinction Rebellion activists threw 200 liters of fake blood outside Downing Street in March 2019.

School students around the world have been [skipping school](#) to demand that world leaders take action on climate change.

The [movement](#) has spanned more than 100 countries and 1,500 cities, with teenagers missing out on their education to show how worried they are about the threat to their future.

In response to critics, who say Extinction Rebellion is causing unnecessary disruption and wasting police time, the activists say the "climate and ecological emergency" demands their actions.



Global Climate Strike: Meet the teenagers skipping school to fight for a greener planet

"I think that any suffering that is caused as a result of a few hours sitting in a traffic jam is incomparable to what is going to happen in a few years" said Paluch-Machnik.

London's Metropolitan Police Service told CNN that it is aware of a number of Extinction Rebellion demonstrations and protests planned over the coming weeks, and that "Appropriate policing plans are in place."

It added: "We will always provide a proportionate policing plan to balance the right to a peaceful protest, while ensuring that disruption to communities is kept to a minimum."

This Monday, the group plans to shut down London in their biggest action yet. They plan to meet at five London locations and block traffic by playing music, hosting discussions and refusing to move from the street.

Demonstrators blocked Waterloo Bridge by bringing trees and solar panels.



**Noel Douglas**  
@signsofrevolt

Waterloo bridge blocked with people, trees, plants and solar panels! #ExtinctionRebellion #XR #london #waterloo

9:28 PM - Apr 15, 2019

57 people are talking about this

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)



Extinction Rebellion demonstrating on Waterloo Bridge, London, April 15, 2019.

The group says hundreds of people have taken time off work to camp for as long as it takes get their demands heard by the government. [Read more coverage of the protest.](#)

## Semi-naked climate protesters disrupt Brexit debate

Activists spent almost 20 minutes with their hands glued to the public gallery and buttocks facing the chamber

**How did each MP vote in the indicative votes?**

**Jessica Elgot** Chief political correspondent

@jessicaelgot

Mon 1 Apr 2019 18.46 BST

Last modified on Tue 2 Apr 2019 09.16 BST



Extinction Rebellion activists stripped off in House of Commons public gallery. Photograph: Extinction Rebellion/EPA

Semi-naked climate change protesters interrupted a [House of Commons](#) Brexit debate and glued their hands to the glass of the public gallery,

spending almost 20 minutes with their buttocks facing the chamber.

MPs attempted to continue the debate during the peaceful protest by 11 activists from Extinction Rebellion, though several made coded mentions to the protest in their speeches.

Protesters had slogans daubed on their chests, including “for all life” and “SOS” and two more wore grey body paint and elephant masks, which the group said referred to climate change as “the elephant in the room”.

Police cleared the public gallery in the House of Commons and then removed the protesters individually, some of whom were carried out by officers.

The police later said 12 people had been arrested “for outraging public decency”.

The protest began during a speech by the Labour MP Peter Kyle, who was arguing in favour of his motion to add a confirmatory Brexit referendum.

The Tory MP Justine Greening congratulated Kyle for “fleshing out his arguments very well indeed” and Kyle in turn thanked the Conservative MP Steve Brine for a “cheeky intervention”.

The Conservative Nick Boles congratulated Kyle for delivering his speech “with a certain amount of distraction” and quipped that many of his Tory colleagues appeared to be missing from the benches around him including “a noted naturalist”.

Boles was referring to the Brexiter MP Bernard Jenkin – who enjoys nudism as a private hobby.

In a point of order, the Conservative MP Nigel Evans said the House of Commons had dealt well with “a distraction, not a disruption to our proceedings” and thanked police and Commons officials.

The Speaker, John Bercow, also thanked officials after the protesters were removed. “We just press on with the debate, that is what we are here to do,” he said, to cheers in the chamber.

In a statement after the protest, one of the activists, Mark Ovland, said climate change was being “flagrantly and recklessly ignored by our government and media” and the group wanted to draw attention to the crisis during the debate on Brexit.

“By undressing in parliament, we are putting ourselves in an incredibly vulnerable position, highlighting the vulnerability that all of us share in the face of environmental and societal breakdown,” he said.

Another of the activists, Iggy Fox, said: “I’m tired of the time and resources our government wastes rearranging the deckchairs on the Brexitanic. It’s high time politicians stop beating around the bush and tackle the environmental crisis head on, like they should have done years ago. I won’t stop causing disruption until the government does its duty to protect the people from disaster.”

## Extinction Rebellion London activists chained to Jeremy Corbyn's home

47 minutes ago



### Media caption

Specialist police teams were used to remove the group from the DLR train

Climate change activists glued themselves to a train and others chained themselves to Jeremy Corbyn's home in a third day of protests. Extinction Rebellion protesters have been blocking traffic at Marble Arch, Waterloo Bridge, Parliament Square and Oxford Circus since Monday. Earlier, three activists were glued to a Docklands Light Railway (DLR) train at Canary Wharf, causing minor delays. Four people also glued themselves together at the Labour leader's home.



Image copyright

PA

Image caption

Four people glued themselves together at Jeremy Corbyn's home in north London

The activists, who also used a bike lock to attach themselves to Mr Corbyn's north London house, said they supported him but wanted the Labour Party to go further than declaring a "climate emergency".

After ending their protest Tracee Williams, one of the group, said she did not think the action was a "misstep but whether we'd do it again, I'm not so sure".

Mr Corbyn left his home but declined to meet or speak to any of the protesters.

Easter eggs and flowers from the group, which had been taken into Mr Corbyn's home earlier, were later returned to the street by the Labour leader's wife Laura Alvarez.

Ms Williams added the group "really felt we had to bring it to his front door" but "feel absolutely terrible about upsetting his wife".

As of 17:00 BST, 340 people have been arrested since Monday over the protests, the Met Police said.



Image copyright

PA

Image caption

Jeremy Corbyn declined to speak to any of the protesters when he left his home

The campaigner who glued himself to a train window was removed about an hour after the start of the DLR protest, at about 10:50.

The man and a woman who unfurled a banner and glued themselves to the top of the train's carriage were also later removed and carried off by officers.

BTP said three people had been arrested for obstructing the railway.

**Extinction Rebellion: Can the plan work?**

**Climate protest arrests close to 300**

**'Our objective is to cause disruption'**

Extinction Rebellion targeted the DLR after members changed their minds about disrupting the Tube network.

It came after BTP ordered Transport for London (TfL) to switch off wifi at Tube stations to deter protests.



Image copyright

GETTY IMAGES

Image caption

Two activists climbed on to a train at Canary Wharf while another glued his hand to the window

Supt Matt Allingham said extra officers would be on duty throughout the day, adding: "We will not tolerate any activity which disrupts the millions of passengers who rely on using the rail network in London."

Campaigners at Waterloo Bridge, Parliament Square and Oxford Circus have been ordered to restrict their protests to Marble Arch.

The Met said protesters were being removed from both areas and those who did not comply would be arrested.

Skip Twitter post by @ExtinctionR

Suddenly, a huge crowd of drummers appear in Parliament Square.

I have no idea how this happened or where they came from.

Truly unbelievable spirit. You cannot resist this urgent call for climate justice. [#InternationalRebellionpic.twitter.com/a00A6iFdmf](https://twitter.com/a00A6iFdmf)

— Extinction Rebellion 🐝🍷🦋 (@ExtinctionR) April 17, 2019

End of Twitter post by @ExtinctionR

Report



Image copyright

@EXTINCTIONR

Image caption

Police have been sent in to clear protesters from Waterloo Bridge, Parliament Square and Oxford Circus

## How do you unglue a protester?

The Metropolitan Police says it uses a "fluid de-bonding agent" - but refuses to specify what that contains for operational reasons.

Dr Mark Elliott, a senior lecturer in organic chemistry at Cardiff University, said warm, soapy water or the compound acetone would be the most suitable method - but warned any removal was likely to be painful.

"Anyone who has inadvertently stuck their fingers together with superglue will know how difficult and painful it can be to separate them - and the fingertips are relatively tough," he says.

"It is even more painful when other, softer, areas of skin become bonded."

According to Dr Elliott, the general advice is to use warm, soapy water, then to apply gentle pressure - for example by inserting a spatula.

"This will inevitably take time and be rather painful," he warned.

Alternatively, acetone - normally found in nail-varnish remover - can make it easier to remove the glue - but "easier", he adds, "is very much a relative term".

### How do you un-glue a protester? (published 2010)

The BBC's Dominic Casciani said about a dozen people were carried to police vans at Oxford Circus after failing to comply with police.

Springwatch presenter **Chris Packham, who was at the protest in Oxford Circus**, said the atmosphere was "peaceful and resolute".

Skip Twitter post by @ChrisGPackham

Spirits high and the mood is peaceful and resolute at Oxford Circus with [@ExtinctionR pic.twitter.com/FL8hDGTfKw](https://twitter.com/ExtinctionR pic.twitter.com/FL8hDGTfKw)

— Chris Packham (@ChrisGPackham) April 17, 2019

End of Twitter post by @ChrisGPackham

Most of the people arrested so far have been held over public order offences.  
The Met Police said "contingency plans are in place should custody suites become full".



Image copyright

AFP

Image caption

Protesters are being removed from Waterloo Bridge by police

**Extinction Rebellion earlier said "thousands" more people were willing to be arrested as part of the non-violent disruption.**

**Dozens of protesters arrested in Edinburgh**

**What is climate change?**

**The protesters who want to get arrested**

It had been planning to target London Underground to "highlight the emergency of ecological collapse" and persuade ministers to meet group members.

The campaign group said: "Today we will disrupt one overground line as part of our escalating campaign to demand the government acts now on the climate and ecological emergency."

**London Mayor Sadiq Khan urged protesters** to "think again", adding public transport helped tackle climate change.

Skip Twitter post 2 by @ExtinctionR

As dawn breaks on the third day of the Rebellion, protesters have held on to all four of their locations. With police cells full, thousands more Rebels willing to be arrested and hundreds joining daily, Government is increasingly feeling the pressure. [pic.twitter.com/enXhRneecN](https://pic.twitter.com/enXhRneecN)

— Extinction Rebellion 🐝👤🦋 (@ExtinctionR) April 17, 2019

Report

End of Twitter post 2 by @ExtinctionR

Music student Anouska Stahlmann said her ill mother and elderly grandparents were forced to walk part of their journey to avoid risking being stuck in a Tube tunnel.

The 20-year-old said: "I have no issue with wanting to better the environment and we're fairly conscious of it as a family.

"Their methods, however, are seriously flawed and are not inclusive of people who want to support the cause."

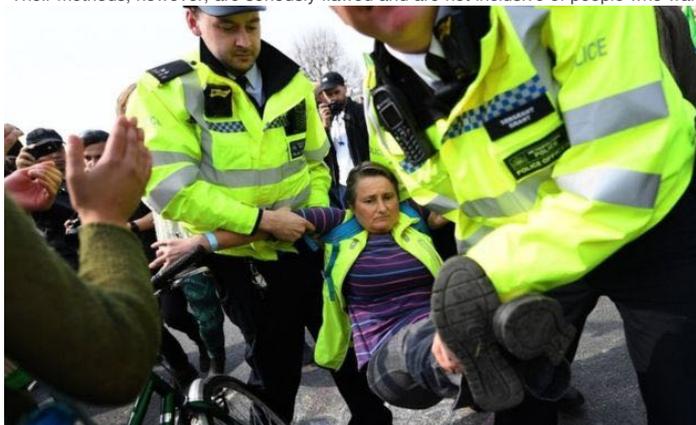


Image copyright

EPA

Image caption

So far, 340 people have been arrested during the week's protests

Protester and climate lawyer Farhana Yamin, who was arrested on Tuesday, **earlier told BBC Radio 4's Today programme:** "I totally want to apologise to people using public transport.

"But at the same time we need to take actions that are disruptive so everyone understands the dangers we're facing right now."



image copyright DANIEL LEAL-OLIVAS/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

image caption Oxford Street has been empty of traffic since activists parked a pink boat in Oxford Circus on Monday

Jace Tyrrell, chief executive of New West End Company, said the West End lost £12m in trade because of the first two days of protests. He told **BBC Radio London**: "Everyone has a right to peaceful protest. But this is really disruptive." In Edinburgh, dozens of people were arrested earlier this week when hundreds of protesters blocked a main road.



image copyright REUTERS

image caption Police ordered protesters to retreat to the site of their camp at Marble Arch

Organisers said protests had been held in more than 80 cities across 33 countries and action in London was planned until 29 April. Environment Secretary Michael Gove said "it's appropriate for people to make their feelings known" but added: "We've got the message; we understand that action needs to be taken." Speaking on the BBC's The One Show, he said some of the protest action had been "over the top" but driven by a "legitimate desire to put climate change and the environment further up the agenda". Mr Gove said the UK had "played a role in reducing carbon emissions and at the same time growing the economy", but admitted "there is more to be done".

### What is Extinction Rebellion?



Media caption Extinction Rebellion: The story behind the activist group

Since the group was set up last year, members have shut bridges, poured buckets of fake blood outside Downing Street, blockaded the BBC and stripped semi-naked in Parliament.

**It has three core demands:** for the government to "tell the truth about climate change", reduce carbon emissions to zero by 2025, and create a citizens' assembly to oversee progress.

Controversially, the group is trying to get as many people arrested as possible.

But critics say they cause unnecessary disruption and waste police time when forces are already overstretched.

The government said it shared "people's passion" to combat climate change and "protect our planet for future generations".

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy said the UK had cut its emissions by 44% since 1990.

A spokesman said: "We've asked our independent climate experts for advice on a net zero emissions target and set out plans to transition to low emission vehicles and significantly reduce pollution."

## Humanity is at a crossroads, Greta Thunberg tells Extinction Rebellion

Swedish climate activist's speech comes amid police action to clear protesters from Waterloo Bridge

**Vikram Dodd, Damien Gayle and Mattha Busby**

Sun 21 Apr 2019 20:35 BST

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Greta Thunberg addressed protesters at the Marble Arch site on Sunday evening. Photograph: Tolga Akmen/AFP/Getty

Governments will no longer be able ignore the impending climate and ecological crisis, **Greta Thunberg**, the teenage climate activist, has told **Extinction Rebellion** protesters gathered at Marble Arch in London.

In a speech on Sunday night where she took aim at politicians who have for too long been able to satisfy demands for action with "beautiful words and promises", the Swedish 16-year-old said humanity was sitting at a crossroads, but that those gathered had chosen which path they wish to take.

### Q&A

What is Extinction Rebellion?

#### Show

"I come from Sweden and back there it's almost the same problem as here, as everywhere, that nothing is being done to stop an ecological crisis despite all the beautiful words and promises," she told the crowd.

"We are now facing an existential crisis, the climate crisis and ecological crisis which have never been treated as crises before, they have been ignored for decades.



Swedish schoolgirl climate activist Greta Thunberg speaks to the Extinction Rebellion protesters. Photograph: Neil Hall/EPA

“And for way too long the politicians and the people in power have gotten away with not doing anything. We will make sure that politician’s will not get away with it for any longer.”

Her speech came amid police efforts to forcibly clear Extinction Rebellion protesters from Waterloo Bridge as the group debated whether to continue its campaign of mass civil disobedience. Police said on Sunday night they had cleared all the protesters from Parliament Square.

The London mayor, Sadiq Khan, said the disruption was “counter-productive” to the cause of climate change and was stretching resources so much it could damage police’s ability to fight violent crime.

Extinction Rebellion had earlier said it expected its supporters would be cleared out of the two sites occupied without permission as police prepared to evict them if they declined to leave voluntarily.

Last week, the group gained global coverage for the disruption its tactics of civil disobedience caused in central London. On Sunday, the organisers said they intended to change tack and would offer to vacate some sites in exchange for the mayor acting on some of their demands.

The Metropolitan police said they had made 963 arrests and charged 42 people. The force’s leader, Cressida Dick, said the group’s tactics, centred on peaceful direct action, had caused too much disruption.

On Saturday, Oxford Circus and Piccadilly Circus were returned to normal use, after complaints from businesses about the blocking of some of the capital’s key arteries.



Police dismantle the skate ramp erected by Extinction Rebellion demonstrators on Waterloo Bridge in London. Photograph: Victoria Jones/PA

On Sunday, activists rushed to Parliament Square, when police turned up in force to try to clear five roadblocks. Activists were using lock-on devices to hold the space, as well as gluing themselves to the ground and each other in order to slow down the police.

Activists said there were three people locked on trees in the square with more ready to go up. They promised attempts to evict them would be “spectacular” and could take police all night. However, by Sunday evening the police said the square had been cleared.

The stage-truck on Waterloo Bridge was finally removed by 5am on Sunday after police spent most of Saturday and well into the night removing protesters glued and locked on to it. Police spent hours using angle grinders to cut free the two protesters who had locked themselves down on the top of truck, before winching them down and carrying them into the back of waiting police vans.

By Sunday night they were moving the activists to one side of the carriageway, and arresting those who are refusing to move.

The Met has needed support from about 200 officers from other forces to deal with the protests, which have been peaceful.

Khan said 9,000 officers had been involved in policing the protest so far. He said: "I share the passion about tackling climate change of those protesting, and support the democratic right to peaceful and lawful protest, but this is now taking a real toll on our city – our communities, businesses and police. This is counter-productive to the cause and our city."

The mayor added: "I remain in close contact with the Met commissioner, and agree that Londoners have suffered too much disruption and that the policing operation has been extremely challenging for our over-stretched and under-resourced police.

"I'm extremely concerned about the impact the protests are having on our ability to tackle issues like violent crime if they continue any longer. It simply isn't right to put Londoners' safety at risk like this."



Young protesters hold placards on Waterloo Bridge on Sunday. Photograph: Jack Taylor/Getty

The protest group said a phalanx of police vans were gathered around Waterloo Bridge on Sunday amid mounting expectation protesters would be forced out.

Ronan McNern, a spokesperson for Extinction Rebellion, said: "We think they want everything cleared by the end of the week. People are willing to be arrested. There is a deep sense we do not want to be attached to any single site. What this disruption is doing, we are the news now. It is making people talk in pubs and buses about Extinction Rebellion. It makes them think about their existence which is under threat."

Extinction Rebellion is discussing withdrawing from some sites in return for being allowed to remain in others and having its demands met.



Slow burn? The long road to a zero-emissions UK

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/apr/21/long-road-to-zero-emissions-uk>

One manifesto from **Farhana Yamin**, an **international environmental lawyer**, advocated a "pause" in disruption next week to better project their demands and press for negotiations with government.

She wrote: "Today marks a transition from week one, which focused on actions that were vision-holding but also caused mass 'disruption' across many dimensions (economic, cultural, emotional, social). Week two marks a new phase of rebellion focused on 'negotiations' where the focus will shift to our actual political demands."

She continued: "We want to show that XR [Extinction Rebellion] is a cohesive long-term, global force, not some flash in the pan."

The Extinction Rebels have got their tactics badly wrong. Here's why

*Andre Spicer*

[Read more](#)

# Labour endorses Extinction Rebellion activists after week of protest

Shadow health secretary pledges to make climate change a central policy focus

**Matthew Taylor, Peter Walker, Damien Gayle and Molly Blackall**

Tue 23 Apr 2019 19.14 BST

Last modified on Wed 24 Apr 2019 00.55 BST



Labour's Jon Ashworth expressed his support for a citizens' assembly. Photograph: Kirsty O'Connor/PA

Labour has backed the **Extinction Rebellion** protesters who have carried out a week of civil disobedience and occupations to highlight the ecological emergency, likening them to the Chartists, suffragettes and anti-apartheid activists.

Speaking in response to an urgent question in the Commons on Tuesday, the shadow energy minister, Barry Gardiner – who also holds the international trade role – said that alongside the school strikes, the protests organised by Extinction Rebellion were reminiscent of previous memorable struggles.

“All of those victories were won by citizens uniting against injustice, making their voice heard. And Extinction Rebellion and **the school climate strikers** are doing just that,” Gardiner said.

**'I would go to prison': the ordinary people getting arrested for Extinction Rebellion**  
[Read more](#)

Outside parliament, several hundred protesters from Extinction Rebellion gathered to call for politicians to engage with their three demands: for politicians to tell the truth, for the UK to cut carbon emissions to zero by 2025, and for the formation of a citizens' assembly.

Jon Ashworth, the shadow health secretary, came out to speak to the crowd, pledging to make climate change a central focus of Labour's health and wellbeing policy and expressed his support for a citizens' assembly.

Inside the chamber, former Labour leader Ed Miliband said the government must declare a climate emergency and introduce a **“green new deal”**.

Miliband, who was the energy and climate change secretary under Gordon Brown, said the protesters were correct. “The truth is the planet is warming far faster than we are acting,” he said. “Climate change is not some theoretical future prospect, but is with us here and now.”

Responding for the government, Claire Perry, the energy minister, rejected the idea of a climate emergency – “I don't know what that would entail” – and said she had reservations about the **Extinction Rebellion** protests.

While she was glad such arguments were being heard, Perry said: “They have caused disruption for many hundreds and thousands of hard-working Londoners and they have required a heavy policing presence.

“I worry that many of the messages we are hearing ignore the progress that is being made, and as such make people fearful for the future rather than hopeful.”

More than 1,000 Extinction Rebellion activists **have been arrested** in the past week in a campaign of mass non-violent direct action orchestrated by the group to highlight how little time there is to halt manmade ecological breakdown.

Protesters occupied four sites across the capital and staged various acts of civil disobedience including blocking roads, disrupting a train line and conducting a protest at Heathrow airport.

On Tuesday the group said it intended to carry out more actions in the next few days – including blocking roads in and around the City of London on Thursday.

The group's “rapid response team” met on Tuesday to decide its strategy for the coming weeks. A spokesperson said they were discussing how, when and if this stage of the “rebellion” should end rather than whether there should be more actions this week. The group said there would be two

more “people’s assemblies” in the next few days at its Marble Arch camp before a final decision would be made on Wednesday.

“We have had enormous success and intend to continue,” said a spokesperson. “But what shape that is going to take and when we end is under discussion. It is important that we do have a little pause to take stock and get feedback from everyone – it has been an incredibly intense few days.”

One of the group’s co-founders, Roger Hallam, said: “We do want to negotiate with the government and will pause the disruption if that happens but at the moment it is all systems go ... the rebellion continues.”

On Tuesday the group announced it had raised almost £200,000 – mostly in small donations of between £10 and £50 – since the protests began, making a total of £365,000 since January.

Scotland Yard’s tactics in policing the demonstrations appeared to harden at the weekend with protesters cleared from three of their four roadblocks. On Tuesday officers told Extinction Rebellion organisers that they faced arrest if they incited protesters to block roads around Parliament Square. Police said they were imposing preemptive conditions restricting any demonstration outside the Houses of Parliament.

Liam Geary Baulch, from London, said relations between the group and the police had become increasingly strained, with dismay over the Met’s decision to name those charged in connection with the protest and to seize a sound system it had been using in Marble Arch.

“We have seen thousands of people take non-violent action and over 1,000 arrests, yet we have had no complaints from the police about violence,” Geary Baulch said.

# Support for Extinction Rebellion soars in wake of Easter protests

Climate activists says pressure growing on politicians to act as donations flood in

**Matthew Taylor**

Wed 24 Apr 2019 11.30 BST

Last modified on Wed 24 Apr 2019 12.14 BST

The Extinction Rebellion camp at Marble Arch in central London. Photograph: Ollie Millington/Getty Images



Support for Extinction Rebellion in the UK has quadrupled in the past nine days as public concern about the scale of the ecological crisis grows.

Since the “rebellion” began last Monday, 30,000 new backers or volunteers have offered their support to the environmental activist group. In the same period it has raised almost £200,000 – mostly in donations of between £10 and £50 – making a total of £365,000 since January.

The group said the figures showed the public was waking up to the scale of the crisis, adding that pressure was growing on politicians to act.

“What this shows is that Extinction Rebellion has spoken to people who have been wanting to act on this for such a long time but haven’t known how,” said a spokesperson for the group. “The debate on this is over – ordinary people are now saying it is time for politicians to act with real urgency.”

The group said numbers of people on the streets for the protests had dwindled from a high over the Easter bank holiday weekend but that the number of people who had signed up to offer ongoing support for future demonstrations had risen from 10,000 before the protest to 40,000 by Wednesday morning.

The Extinction Rebellion spokesperson said the group was also becoming more diverse – attracting more working-class and black and minority ethnic supporters. “But that is definitely a work in progress – there is still more work to do in that area,” she added.

The figures came a day after Greta Thunberg, the 16-year-old Swedish student, who sparked a global youth-based movement when she began a “climate strike” outside Sweden’s parliament last year, visited Westminster.

In a speech to MPs, she said: “You lied to us. You gave us false hope. You told us that the future was something to look forward to. You don’t listen to the science because you are only interested in solutions that will enable you to carry on like before.”

Extinction Rebellion’s youth group wrote to MPs on Wednesday, as parliament restarted after the Easter break, pleading with them to act swiftly to address the crisis.

The letter states: “We are writing to ask you to hear the science, to feel the public’s change of heart and to act now to save our futures ... Now the time has arrived to stand up and be counted – you are our elected representatives and we need your help.”

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On Tuesday, the group said it intended to carry out further actions in the next few days – including blocking roads in and around the City of London on Thursday. It is debating how and when to stop this stage of the protests.

On Tuesday, senior Labour figures backed the protesters, likening them to the Chartists, suffragettes and anti-apartheid activists.

Speaking in response to an urgent question in the Commons, the shadow energy minister, Barry Gardiner said alongside the school strikes, the Extinction Rebellion protests were reminiscent of previous struggles.

“All of those victories were won by citizens uniting against injustice, making their voice heard. And Extinction Rebellion and **the school climate strikers** are doing just that,” he said.

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She said though she was glad such arguments were being heard, they had caused “disruption for many hundreds and thousands of hard-working Londoners and they have required a heavy policing presence. I worry that many of the messages we are hearing ignore the progress that is being made, and as such make people fearful for the future rather than hopeful.”

Others in the group's leadership were planning further disruption and a meeting this week will attempt to decide on the group's strategy.

# Extinction Rebellion protesters may sue Met after protest ban ruled illegal

**Section 14 order issued to ban protest across London was not legitimate, high court rules**

**Damien Gayle**

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Wed 6 Nov 2019 10.10 GMT

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Extinction Rebellion environmental activists assembled in Trafalgar Square, London. Photograph: Ollie Millington/Getty Images

Hundreds of **Extinction Rebellion** protesters may now sue the Metropolitan police for unlawful arrest after the high court quashed an order banning the group's protests in London last month.

In a judgment handed down on Wednesday morning, Mr Justice Dingemans and Mr Justice Chamberlain said the section 14 order imposed during XR's "autumn uprising" in October was unlawful

The case was brought by seven prominent supporters of XR: Baroness Jenny Jones, Caroline Lucas and Ellie Chowns of the Green party, the Labour MPs Clive Lewis and David Drew, the Labour activist Adam Allnutt and the Guardian environment writer George Monbiot.

Jones said: “This is an historic win because for the first time we’ve challenged the police on overstepping their powers and we’ve won. It’s great.”

The ban was implemented under Section 14 of the Public Order Act at 9pm on Monday 14 October and lasted until 6pm on Friday 18 October. In the meantime, according to Metropolitan **Police** figures, more than 400 Extinction Rebellion activists were arrested.

Before the ruling, human rights lawyer Tobias Garnett, who was working with Extinction Rebellion’s legal strategy team, warned that protesters arrested under the order would be likely to bring legal cases against the Met if the order was ruled unlawful.

“It means there are a couple of hundred people whose arrests were maybe unlawful,” he said. “That means they might have a cause of false imprisonment.”

The issuing of the order was criticised by the civil rights groups Amnesty International UK, Article 19 and Liberty as an assault on the right to protest.