

# Rebellion Weavers' Report: June 2020

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## WHO ARE THE WEAVERS?

The Rebellion Weavers are a group of rebels set up to 'weave' input into planning the next mass rebellion. They were selected by a nomination process involving regional action coordinators and members of [UK Action Circle](#). Their [mandate](#) is focused around good communication, to effectively hear needs from the wider movement and all working groups to co-create the best rebellion yet! They bring together this input and make proposals to the UK Action Circle, working closely with other key teams such as the regional Action Planners, Media & Messaging and Political Circle.

## INTRO

This document outlines a summary of the consultation the Weavers have undertaken in June 2020 with all regional groups in the UK, all UK working groups and advice from experts in climate science and social movement strategy. We want to acknowledge the following:

- The difficulty of decision-making during the uncertain time of a global pandemic: We feel a duty to balance peoples' safety in minimising mass gatherings with the urgent need to rebel and hold the UK Government to account on their inaction on the Climate and Ecological Emergency.

- The rapidly developing context around the social and political landscape we are in. The uprising for racial justice is a part of the climate struggle and cannot be considered separate to our rebellion planning.
- We have not always got it right before! We want to listen to the movement more effectively and have reflected a lot on the successes and failures of our last Rebellions and the plans for May 2020 that were cancelled.
- In the midst of this crisis, we are thrilled to present a rebellion plan that puts into practice our demand for participatory democracy. This is the first time we have come together so strongly on a co-created plan, hearing voices from all over the UK and aligning in our collective passion!

A very broad range of contradictory feedback was given and therefore it is impossible to follow all the advice. Although pulled in many directions, we tried to keep the scale of the emergency in mind as our main guide. We will now outline an analysis of the feedback and then the reasoning for the decisions we have made.

## FEEDBACK ANALYSIS

We opened up conversations about the next rebellion in the most relational and qualitative way possible, so as to build connections across groups and allow inclusivity in being able to send us your thoughts. It is therefore not possible to collate these responses giving equal weight to each response as some are from individuals, some from regional peoples' assemblies, some from working groups and some from affinity groups. However there is a pattern, and we tried to focus on the main key points that showed convergence.

We asked these broad questions in our conversations:

### Should we 'rebel' on mass in 2020 or push it back into 2021?

Responses were split and conflicting on this, with the need to act on the CEE, act with BLM and re-catalyse the movement set against perceived lack of capacity, lack of time and a possible COVID-19 second wave. There is no overwhelming % in either direction. It is worth noting that the responses we received wanting to rebel *now* came to us with a lot of vigour, whilst responses wanting to not have a rebellion against til 2021 were cautious of capacity and travelling during Covid. Some of the responses, needs and tensions that arose from the feedback:

Move at speed of trust (less urgency & self-imposed deadlines)
If we plan for this year, there must be flexibility, based around uncertainty of Covid second wave
Fear of planning at all for mass event in time of Covid and that we could be blamed for second wave of covid in Autumn
Urgency to address climate crisis
Urgency to take BLM and solidarity with racial justice into account
Risk of failure in 2020 due to current capacity, fear of being overambitious
Rebels need a shared purpose and strong narrative to rebel this year
Need 3 months ideally/ample time to mass mobilise and plan

Be relevant in climate movement/public opinion (i.e don't do nothing for 1 year)
If we plan something for September and it falls through/we have to cancel, this would be damaging for the movement
Desire to see the strategic reasoning behind when to rebel communicated well. Accepting that we may not succeed or even have concrete objectives, but we have a moral duty to act

See [Appendix](#) for full list of criteria & tensions from feedback process

## Mass Arrest/ Disruption/ Theory of Change?

As above there is a variety of views on this. Some of those who are willing to risk arrest would like targeted actions (against bad players) rather than mass disruption (i.e. not wanting to disrupt the public.) A lot of feedback said that mass arrest is no longer viable going forward as a *focus* of our tactics and messaging, for various reasons including being a 'broken record', ignorance of the lack of inclusivity to those who face oppression from the police, and not having the capacity. We should explore high-impact alternatives, and at least focus the messaging around our duty to act, civil disobedience and the need to rebel. Needs and tensions heard:

Be radical and disruptive - <i>mixed feedback on public vs targeted disruption</i>
Rebuild community, be the change, focus on mutual aid
Are we acknowledging social justice and need for systemic change?
Needing more fluidity and reactionary strategy/ToC
Feelings around our ToC being outdated and needing evolution
Mass arrest strategy is challenge for BLM collaboration
Questioning the term 'Rebellion' being too loaded now - suggestion of using different framing?

## Location: Dispersed or in the Capital?

There was some coherence around the responses here. The strategic importance of the capital was understood, but the impact of Covid was cited as a barrier to travel. There was a call for coordinated geographical dispersed actions, with some calls for London only. Tensions and needs heard:

The impact on arrest and legal support needs to be considered - from the point of view of being able to give enough legal briefings for varied dispersed actions across the UK and the pressure on a centralised back office
The potential loss of impact/response from the state in geographically dispersed actions
Strong alignment in a call to act regionally this year, not wanting to travel during Covid, and building to a 2021 rebellion back in the capital.

## Action Design

There was a wide range of responses relating to action design and ideas, with some convergence that we should have clear targets, decentralised actions, a clear narrative and a simple design. There was a strong call for any action to be designed in such a way that provides accessibility for everyone to participate, whilst being safe in light of Covid. Tensions and needs heard:

Ensure actions enable people to feel safe and able to participate
Show and message links/ solidarity with BLM. Be mindful not to co-opt but to support.
Clear targets: elite/power-holders, not ordinary people
Clear narrative needed to mobilise
Accessible actions for all (a way to support even if staying at home)
Decentralised actions coordinated Nationally for impact ( Also desire for London as a target)
Possibility of a different style of rebellion?
Plans should have flexibility, need a 'Plan B'
Less focus on arrests
Desire to co-create rebellion with other movements
Worried that Rebellion this year is "doing stuff for doing stuff sake"
Strong support for 'no going back' message
Desire for fun, joyful and theatrical actions
Desire for simple design, low planning input
Concern for how we can create comparable disruption after disruption of lockdown

## How well are you set-up to support mass-action?

We asked this question mainly to UK working groups, to start conversations on how well de-centralised in structure they all are, and to start groups thinking about, in a potentially dispersed rebellion, what would it make sense to organise centrally, and decentrally. Regional groups also responded in terms of assessing capacity. Some responses heard: being safe in light of Covid. Tensions and needs heard:

Most responses indicate that groups feel set-up to support a major action, although concerns are expressed regarding current movement capacity
Recognition that people have stopped engaging with XR over the last few months
Recognition that once we announce the next major action, it will mobilise people and there was confidence expressed that we will be able to fill roles
Acknowledgement of setting our mission on what is necessary (Principle & Value #2) and we will have to do the best we can
Some groups felt they are really not in a place to support mass action yet, and would rather build slowly to next year

## REBELLION DECISIONS

### The Basic Plan

*This proposal was supported by Action Circle on 19.06.20 and given to regional Action Planners to develop further:*

*Local and regional groups are invited to come up with creative ways to achieve the goals set out here.*

## DATES

- Begin Friday 28th August (Bank holiday weekend) - Pressure-building, mobilising actions, keeping in mind BLM and Covid
- Rebelling through 1st September and beyond when Parliament returns in London and 13th Sept in Cardiff (Scottish Parliament already sitting.)
- Recommending Action Circle set a date for next Spring for a London rebellion.

## SCALE

- High-impact disruption, as big as groups feel they can go
- Opportunity for coordinated, easy-access, mass civil disobedience involvement
- Aiming to get reaction from the state to our action by creating a dilemma

## LOCATION

- Dispersed Actions across UK at high-impact locations
- Recommending 5-10 cities/locations across the UK to be decided by Action Planners Circle (based on organisational capacity, strength of groups and travel links being available)
- Regions can merge or split as works best - E.g South West & Bristol might want to combine, London groups might want to split and cause dispersed havoc around London
- Supported by UK teams based on needs

## Developed Plan: Blockade Parliaments!

*This was further developed and agreed by regional Action Planners and Action Circle on 29.06.20:*

### Down The Pub Outline

On the 1st September we will peacefully blockade the UK parliaments until our demands are met. It's the day that the UK parliament starts re-sitting after the summer: but we're not going to let them back in until they agree to start anew with justice, care and life at the heart of it. Leading up to September, starting from the 28th August we will create high impact disruption in towns, cities and regions all across the UK as a period of warning to our governments that the 1st September Rebellion is coming.

### Full Outline

**28th - 31st August:** A build up period of mobilising actions all across the UK, starting with a coordinated, inclusive and easy-access action taking place in all the regions over the Bank Holiday weekend and inspirational, significantly targeted actions. The objectives for this are: build the movement, cause high impact disruption, and gain media coverage and promote the Parliament blockade starting 1st September. This period should be an empowering time for regions to show what they can do.

**1st September onwards:** UK Parliament (London) is peacefully blockaded on the day it *tries* to re-sit after the summer recess. Welsh Parliament (Cardiff) is sequentially peacefully blockaded on the 13th Sept. We invite Scotland and the North to join in this Parliamentary focus and will share more info soon! Using inspiring and creative NVDA we'll disrupt the entrances and roads leading to the buildings whilst providing non-arrestable and visioning opportunities in the space outside. This will likely put significant pressure on the police and lead to many arrests, but this is not the

headline purpose. Within the capacity of rebels on the ground we will aim to peacefully blockade the parliaments for as long as it takes for our leaders to meet our demands.

**Digital Rebellion:** For rebels who are still shielding or who are unable to travel to major cities for the shutdown of parliaments, there will be a digital rebellion. This will involve spamming the social media accounts, email address, and telephone lines of Government offices, causing equivalent virtual disruption and speaking to employees while we are present on the ground. We will further develop our new [disruption platform](#) we have launched on the Bank of England for use during the rebellion in September.

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## REASONING:

### How this plan meets the feedback

**Focusing on stopping a failed system of government** from re-starting is a broad enough message to welcome other groups with other messages. Social Justice movements, frontline workers and climate activists can be united in one core objective: stopping a government that has failed them from returning until it agrees to do better.

**The buildup before going to the capitals will be the opportunity for regions to be autonomous** in their targets and action designs, dependent on their capacity. Regions are calling for a more dispersed rebellion, and this one brings together the two key parts: regional autonomy, and focus on the failed system of government.

**For rebels unable to join the actions**, they can participate in digital disruption from home, applying virtual pressure on the Government. We will also launch the redrafted Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill, enabling rebels to lobby their MPs before Parliament resits.

**Capacity worries:** The parliament blockades don't actually require such enormous numbers to have international impact so it's not 'come to London all or nothing'. We are focusing on high-impact disruption, where it matters.

**Covid concerns:** We will provide up to date medical information, a guide on in-person activism in the midst of covid and ensure we have PPE to make certain we have the safety and informed consent of the rebels in our minds.

**This year or next:** We feel that going for it in August/September gives rebels that are ready and can, the chance to get out there and will mobilise towards inevitably needing another big push next Spring. Rebels can take part from home in September in digital disruption. We are in conversations internationally about setting global rebellion dates for 2021.

**Mass Arrest will not be the headline strategy:** Feedback has shown that rebels see mass arrest as a core element of the strategy but it must have a clear, motivating purpose, and not be the headline. The action needs a *prophetic* quality. In this extraordinary year, peacefully preventing a toxic system of government from re-sitting and creating a better option in the streets outside *is* that prophetic offering that will make people inspired to risk arrest. The intention is to

cause UK-wide, high-impact disruption that causes a dilemma for and reaction from the state. This can be interpreted to focus on institutions of power, such as Government buildings or financial systems, or more generalized mass disruption in city centres or locations that will garner attention. We have also specified there should be easy-to-access participation options for first-time rebels, which the easiest and most obvious plans would include obstructing roads or minimal criminal damage. A 'reaction from the state' may include significant police response, offers of negotiation from people in positions of power or public statements by institutions controlled by the state: such as chiefs of police or MPs. With a sense of strategic overview for a UK-wide dispersed action, we encourage and invite groups to build pressure by all nonviolent means they are able to in a combined effort to gain response from the UK Government.

**Action Design Ideas for Parliaments:** The April 2019 rebellion showed us that the best actions aren't just about mass arrest. They vision a better world, create beautiful disruption and offer a full range of involvement opportunities from high to low sacrifice and disruption. This can be the same with the peaceful blockade of our Parliaments. The action ideas will vary in risk, to be inclusive for all rebels participating.

## How this meets our 2020 Strategy

**People Power** – *Bring a million people in the UK into active support and ensure 50% of the nation see the Climate & Ecological Emergency as their top priority.* - This Rebellion will galvanise the movement and bring an outward facing message that both acknowledges the emergency of the CEE and the current social, cultural and economic landscape we are in. The people of the UK have a multitude of reasons to rebel against the Government right now. The chosen date is particularly to support youth and family involvement before school term restarts.

**Vision** – *We won't wait for our demands to be met, we will begin to enact them, piloting new participatory systems in democracy, media and economics.* - The nature of the very planning of the rebellion will embody the change we want to see. We have enacted participatory democracy in how we have brought this plan together! We will, by the high-impact targets of actions in the rebellion, expose the power of the corporate media and economic systems that destroy life on earth. Calling for Citizens' Assembly must be part of our messaging and could be an aligning demand with other social movements. Some actions will present opportunities for Community Assemblies to be held alongside them. Each XR identity group (faith/profession/diaspora) will support XR local groups with resources to invite their whole neighbourhoods to take part. [Trust the People](#) are running workshops on how to run Community Assemblies throughout the summer. The Actions will say NO to the system as it is. The Community Assemblies will say YES to a better world.

**Movement of Movements** – *Grow our connection to, and understanding of, wider movements for change, building stronger relationships, co-creating new stories and visions for the future.* - It is a more pertinent time than ever to collaborate with other movements and find alignment on exposing the systemic failures that have led to social and climate injustice. We will aim to have further conversations with Black Lives Matter and frontline workers: with open hearts and minds to how we can work together to demand change. We must stand alongside marginalised and indigenous communities in our messaging and focus on our third demand.

**Inner Strength** – *Improve internal systems, caring for our Rebels, building our regenerative cultures, adhering to our Principles and Values. We will learn by doing, teach by showing. We will live the change.* - Planning another rebellion together is a huge

part of building our inner strength: we need action to mobilise around. The necessity of planning and collaborating will bring a lot of our internal structural developments into focus. We are united in a shared story and vision of the future, through this pandemic, with fresh love for each other and rage at the systems that continue to fail us.

## NEXT STEPS

Weavers will support collaborations and communication between regions/nations and UK working groups, **ensuring inclusivity in planning and hearing needs**. Recommending, based on feedback:

- **Outreach** to work with **AG Support Network** to ignite mobilization of AGs willing to plan high-impact actions. To also work within **Communities**, collaborate with **Talks & Trainings** to set up a schedule of mobilisation and fresh look at rebel pathway to action
- **Action Planners** to develop new tactics of civil disobedience (but also note there is nothing wrong with simplicity of sitting in the road!), creating actions which invite participation from rebels, and attract everyone to join in (as opposed to instructing rebels to do tasks and deploying them at action sites)
- **Action Planners** in the chosen locations to specify how much support and guidance they need or would like from UK teams. We want to support where there is need and not dictate
- Cross-circle and movement action designing and planning, bringing in **Creative** input in the earliest stage on a UK and local level, using Creative structures we already have in storage
- Recognition and fluidity with a centralised approach being necessary for some UK working groups, and a decentralised approach being better suited to others.
- **Movement of Movements** to reach out to BLM and other movements as soon as possible to invite collaboration and gather overview of various cross-movement conversations
- **Political Circle** to consider firm 'asks' of this rebellion and renewed position in the current social landscape of a 4th Demand on Climate Justice
- **Fundraising** to work with Campaigns and M&M on the new website structure, and launch a fundraiser for this rebellion asap!
- **Weavers** to work on a plan B! If a significantly overwhelming second wave of covid arrives at the end of August, we need a back-up plan that upholds the CEE and allows rebels to safely be heard, whilst respecting their hard work in planning leading up to 28th August.
- **Digital** to assess the success of the remote disruption platform and improve it for September
- **Everyone** to come together to see our shared vision, that this can be the best rebellion yet and that we are all crew! Lets prioritise excellent and respectful communication, our love for each other and the planet and giving it our all, being the change we want to see!

## GET IN TOUCH!

Please reach out and get in touch with the Weavers at [rebellionweavers@protonmail.com](mailto:rebellionweavers@protonmail.com). We'd love to hear from you! If you have action ideas, we encourage rebels to communicate through their local groups and regional action coordinators, but we are open to communication any time. Thanks for reading this. We hope to see you out there!

**Rebel for life!**