

## 3.5 Street Talk 2022

### Accessibility Guide - please read beforehand

Notes for speakers and rationale for this updated version of the talk:

**This version is from September 2022 and is focused on clarifying and promoting the plan towards 100k people on the streets in April 2023.**

- Based on research, focus groups, surveys of the public and our own experience from giving these talks, a positive and invitational tone is most effective.
- We assume that people come with some understanding of the climate and ecological emergency and we do not want people to feel like we're telling them what they already know.
- Feedback from the original 3.5 talk also shows that people wanted a clearer picture of XR's strategy, so this version is intended to give a concise but compelling description of what we are asking people to get involved in and what winning looks like with a focus on the power of mass mobilisation.
- We want to keep the barriers to entry and engagement as low as possible and we don't want to have to explain lots of complicated ideas.
- Most content that could be considered 'political' has also been removed for the same reason.
- The first few paragraphs should be delivered slowly with pauses after significant statements to give the audience time to hear and process what you have said.
- Once you start speaking about the plan, your tone, pace and energy should pick up.
- As with the original version, it's important that you make the talk your own.
- Please **stick to the content and timings** but change any specific phrases to language that feels more authentic to you - especially 'I feel...' or 'In my experience...' sentences: you need to feel what you're saying and speak from your experience.
- You don't need to memorise everything and reading sections out is totally fine, especially the first few paragraphs when a slower, more deliberate pace and tone are appropriate.
- You can say something like 'I'm going to read from my notes because this is really important and I want to make sure I get it right.' Being authentic is much more important than being slick.
- You need to be confident and have conviction in the message but you don't need to be perfect in terms of delivery.

- You're not pretending to be an actor, politician or a climate scientist (if you happen to be one of these, then you're definitely not pretending!). The point is, be yourself. If you get emotional, that's powerful and honest.
- Please make sure you have time to practice delivering the script at least 3 times before the booked event. This could be to the mirror, with family or friends or you could record yourself.
- Obviously you need to be confident with the content, get past any awkward phrases or stumbling points and also get used to the timings for each section.
- Rather than having a Q&A with the speaker and that being the end, we are now recommending that this shorter talk is followed by Q&A in smaller groups each with a local XR group member and then, again in smaller groups, explanation of some of the specific ways that people can get involved.
- This is really important as we have done very well at getting people to sign up but we need them to be actively engaged as well as just receiving our messages but not doing anything.
- This part of the event will need to be organised by the local group and might look quite different depending on their capacity etc. so please liaise with the LG before the talk so everyone knows what the plan is.
- If you would like to have a few slides as visual aids that should be fine but please talk that through with the 3.5 speakers group before making your own slides.

## **The Talk [15 mins]**

### **Introductions and sharing [5 mins]**

Hello. Thank you for being here. I'm going to say a few words about the climate and ecological emergency, as well as the many other crises we're facing, and then say what we in Extinction Rebellion are doing about it. That will take about fifteen minutes then there'll be time for questions and we'll explain some of the ways that you could support or get involved. What we're going to talk about is pretty heavy and I'm really grateful for you being here and taking the time to engage with this.

I'd like to start by asking you to introduce yourself to someone you don't know. You could say something about why you've come here to this event - maybe some of the things you're worried about. I'll give you 3 minutes and I'll let you know when we're halfway so you both have time to speak.

### **Introduce yourself - your background up to the point of joining XR.**

#### **Mention people/place you love: [2 mins]**

**(Below is obviously example content so please write your own version no longer than 2 mins)**

"My name is... I was a secondary school teacher. I worked in education because I thought it might be a way of helping young people to learn to enjoy the world and to do good things in it. But I got more and more concerned that our education system is not really set up to do that. I've been worried about environmental issues since I was at school. It took me a long time to accept that the people in power are not taking these issues seriously. I've been an active member of the Green Party, I've written and marched, voted and petitioned; I've changed my lifestyle and spending habits. And I've watched the emissions go up and up. For every year of my life.

My nieces and nephews - who are some of the people I care about most in the world - will grow up over the next couple of decades. In this time, they'll go through the incredible process of coming to know the world and themselves in it. They will imagine their future: who they'll fall in love with, what job they'll have, where they'll live? As the world falls apart around them."

## [5 SECOND PAUSE]

We're all panicking about how we're going to pay our fuel and energy bills - and we should be. There's a war in Europe and we're going into a recession. Do you think we can weather these crises and just keep carrying on until things get back to normal? Do you even believe in normal anymore?

[**Suggested mentions:** A third of Pakistan under water, thousands dead, millions displaced. Months of unprecedented drought and heat followed by torrential rains. 40 degrees celsius in the UK. Drought and fire and floods. This is not the future's problem.]

You've heard about targets set for net zero carbon emissions by 2050 or 2060 - even from some of the big fossil fuel companies. Net zero sounds good, but it turns out that the 12 biggest oil companies are going to spend \$103 million every single day for the rest of this decade drilling for new oil and gas. The UN has said we need to halve emissions by 2030, and these corporations are investing vast amounts of money in projects that will make staying below 2 degrees of warming impossible. Look up 'carbon bombs' and you will read a description of the reality of international policy on carbon emissions - not talk and promises, but what is **actually happening**. Governments around the world are desperate to find cheap gas to respond to the current hike in prices. The companies that extract and sell coal, oil and gas are making unimaginable profits and our leaders are talking - just talking - about targets set for 30 years from now. Our leaders knew, 30 years ago, what had to be done. Since then total global emissions have more than doubled.

Ordinary people, you and me, our children, are facing a future in which we will have no idea what next year is going to look like. Plants and animals survive by adapting to stable weather systems. So do farmers. Children born today will have to be taught, without ever knowing for themselves, the predictable and familiar nature of the seasons that we grew up with. As their world falls apart, will we have the courage to tell them how it was broken?

As things stand, our government is going to allow double the production of fossil fuels up to 2030 as would be consistent with our internationally agreed climate targets and they continue to licence new fossil fuel projects that will extract yet more carbon - carbon that **has to stay in the ground if we are to keep below 2 degrees of warming**. While people are struggling in a cost of living crisis, our government is still giving billions of pounds of our money to fossil fuel companies. Did you hear that the boss of BP recently described the company as a 'cash machine'? He said this when millions can't afford their energy bills and the UN is talking about "code red for humanity".

Individual lifestyle changes will not work quickly enough: we need radical and urgent policy changes, in line with the science. But just as fossil fuel corporations will always prioritise profits, politicians focus only on winning the next election and listening to the lobbyists, not the people. We need **real** leadership which means the courage to make difficult decisions and **real** democracy which means ordinary people deciding whether or not we have a liveable future on this planet. The UN has told us we have a brief and rapidly closing window of opportunity and it will require an urgent reduction of fossil fuel extraction and consumption. Do you honestly believe that this is anywhere near our new government's list of top priorities? So we - and that means **you and me, us together** - have to put enough pressure on them to fulfil their most basic function and take care of our safety and security. We've been told by people inside government and big corporations that they know what needs to happen and they're desperate for that pressure - because they don't know how to do it from the inside. And it's not about sounding the alarm anymore - people know this is an emergency - now it's about making real change happen in the limited time we have left.

We're going to mobilise 100,000 people to come together on the streets of London on **xxxx** next year to demand an immediate end to government funding of the fossil fuel economy through tax relief, subsidies and the granting of new licences. This would not be an immediate end to all fossil fuels but an end to public financial support for the expansion of the fossil fuel economy, in line with UN and International Energy Agency warnings that we must stop all new fossil fuel exploration and extraction if we have any chance of avoiding the worst effects of climate catastrophe. We are also demanding a plan to get us to net zero by 2030 in a fair way and this plan will be decided not by politicians and industry lobbyists, but by ordinary people through a citizens' assembly.

Massive social change - what we need now - happens when a small but significant percentage of the population decide to take united action. In 2019 around 10,000 people took to the streets of London and refused to move until the government listened. As a direct result, the UK parliament, the first in the world, declared a climate and ecological emergency. They did this because of the determination of those people to stay until the job was done and because the action was non-violent and the demands were obviously reasonable to anyone who understands the science of climate change. The march against the Iraq war brought around a million people onto the streets but they marched and went home so nothing changed. Imagine if they had sat down and refused to move. Imagine 100,000 people surrounding parliament and refusing to leave until our future is given back to us.

We can do this. We've been knocking on doors and inviting people to talks across the country. This isn't about identity. It isn't about the clothes you wear, the paper you read or the way you chose to live your life. This is about everything that we love and share. We will not win as divided voices or as individuals in echo chambers. You know people who will agree with what we're saying and they will know others. This is how we grow and unite - this is how we win.

Between now and next April [2023] we're going to knock on doors, grow our mailing lists, make alliances, break down divisions and build strength in unity. We can do this. If we're there on the streets together - minorities with majorities, religious groups arm in arm, professions, unions, parents and grandparents, students and teachers - then we can do this. And when we're there, refusing to move, refusing to be silent, refusing to be complicit, millions will see us and they will think 'that's where I should be'. This is how we win: with a plan, a demand and a way forward.

But we need you now. Whatever time, skills or experience you have, we need you. Most of the work is organising, communicating, logistics and admin. If you have a phone you can call people. If you have a computer you can email. If you live on a street you can knock on doors. If you're shy, we'll introduce you to someone who's not and you can work quietly while they do the talking.

None of us can do this on our own. But we can do it together. So I have two requests: first, if you can, book as much time off as possible from April **xxxx** 2023. Second, help us to mobilise. Whatever time and energy you are able to give, we need you.