

# If we don't uphold Extinction Rebellion's...

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I am a signatory to this letter on Extinction Rebellion that is in [The Observer](#) today.

I am well aware that there will be accusations for doing so. But please read what the letter says. It is about the principle of the issue. It says that XR, whether we all agree with their tactics all the time, are doing something vitally important for us all, which is to demand the radical change required to preserve human life on earth. And it rightly notes that this issue has been ignored for far too long.

For doing this vital task it has been suggested that XR be branded organised criminals, when the worst they have done is spill a little paint and block a road or two for a few hours. Very little change of any importance for the majority of people in the UK has ever happened without such things happening, as anyone with any awareness of history will know.

In contrast to XR, whose focus is on peaceful and harmless protest, we have a government deliberately breaking international law knowing full well that they might as a consequence break a peace accord whilst creating economic, social and political havoc. And it is that same government that wants to define XR as criminal.

So when asked if I wanted to sign this letter it was easy to agree. I support peaceful protest. Most of all, I support XR's right to speak out. We should all have the right to do that without fear. If we do not uphold those who speak out next they will come for us.

*The government is failing us on every count. Deaths from Covid 19; a recovery plan that allocates billions of taxpayers' money to the fossil fuel economy; climate and ecological devastation that has destabilised our planet; refugees used by politicians and media to stir up fear and hatred; Public Health England scrapped with zero consultation. This list is not exhaustive.*

*The system is broken and the government is not protecting us.*

*Extinction Rebellion has helped push the government's failure to act on the climate and ecological emergency into the public eye. Whether or not we agree with their tactics or*

*their targets, by blocking printing presses and delaying newspaper distribution, they have connected the dots of a broken system.*

*For the past 30 years there's been a woeful lack of serious reporting on the climate and ecological emergency due to the billionaire owners' vested interests, and a lack of understanding from reporters, to editors to senior executives, about the severity and scale of the crisis. This has meant a terrifying delay on action to combat climate change.*

*Extinction Rebellion are not organised criminals. They should not be the targets of vitriol and anti-democratic posturing. They're just a group of people who are holding the powerful to account.*

*It's vital that we take this moment to acknowledge that radical change is necessary to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. It's vital that we apply the lessons of the coronavirus pandemic to avoid paying an even more terrible price for poor preparation and a slow, inadequate response to the climate and ecological emergency.*

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**Marina Warner, Dame Vivienne Westwood, Rich Wilson, Jaime Winstone,  
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