

A large crowd of people, primarily young adults, is gathered for a climate protest. They are holding numerous handmade signs with various messages. The background shows a city street with buildings and a crane. The entire image has a blue tint.

Ecologies of UK Social Movements

Natasha Adams - Campaigns Consultant

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Introduction

“It is tempting to see each issue in isolation, losing the connections, missing the unfolding processes, forgetting the history. But it is only by having a handle on the links, the tendencies, the interconnections of past and present in our present history and our historic present that we can measure the gains and losses, the successes and failures, the possibilities and the intransigencies¹”

This paper reviews the environmental and LGBTQ+ UK social movement ecologies over the last 50 years, from the 1970s to the present day. I identified the key groups of actors and organisations required for them to be a success, looking at who was most active, doing what and when, to explore what a typology of the infrastructure of successful social movements might look like.

By sharing this research, I hope to prompt debate in NGOs around their role in the wider movement ecology. Campaigning organisations should be centering what needs to change rather than their own agency. Multiple actors and approaches are needed to build impactful change that lasts, and NGOs must recognise that they are only one (important) piece of the puzzle. NGOs can support, seed, collaborate with and build upon the work of actors across the whole ecology of a movement.

Methodology

The research was conducted via literature review and interviews with relevant movement actors. See appendix below for bibliography and interviewees. I would like to thank all the interviewees that gave their time to speak with me. The report is based on research that was initially undertaken for Save the Children UK, although the views expressed in this report are all my own.

Headlines

The snapshots I explored of these two movements showed that transformational change takes time. Legislative changes, often the campaigning benchmark for success, seem to have deep roots in radical outsider action up to a decade or two earlier, which in turn owes a debt to whole cycles of change focused work preceding it, and so on. ‘Positive’ legislative change often has unintended consequences, which along with ‘negative’ legislative change, can fuel whole new movements to continue the struggle.

¹ Jeffrey Weeks from ‘*The World we Have Won*’

Emerging typology

In the LGBTQ+ and environmental movements in the UK, I found key actors could be grouped as follows:

1. Rebels

This was a group that appeared again and again strongly in both movements, playing an important outsider role, bringing fresh energy and grabbing headlines with brave, surprising, creative, disruptive and sometimes illegal activities.

Some rebel activity is distinctly elitist - for example Greenpeace's own staff and dedicated activists take their actions alone, they don't encourage public participation. This can be very effective at getting targeted media coverage and building organisational brand but doesn't help to grow and empower popular movements. But most rebel activity is unfunded, grassroots led, and open to others to join. It can respond immediately to external events in a way established organisations struggle to, and ebbs and flows over time.

2. News media

Attracting news headlines has been very important for both struggles, whether they're positive or negative towards the cause. Getting attention and getting into public awareness helped build public support, and controversy has drawn people into the debate. Attention has tended to be sustained much more by the unfolding drama of protest or controversy than by reports, figures and evidence, although this too has played a role.

NGOs such as Greenpeace have been very successful when able to force TV broadcasters to use their footage, thus keeping their framing. Such control is now possible via social media, and the transfer of stories from this into more traditional media when they become big enough (e.g. the [banning of the recent Iceland / Greenpeace palm oil ad](#)).

3. Culture, celebrity & transformative thought leadership

As well as actual news, the role of cultural storytelling and prominence of homosexual celebrities was very important in the transformative evolution of public opinion around LGBTQ+ issues, from the scandal surrounding the first homosexual kisses on tv to the coming out of prominent public figures.

This has been less true in the environmental movement, which instead has made media celebrities out of unlikely rebels, like [Swampy of the road protest movement in the 1990s](#). But what the environmental movement has had instead is really significant, impactful publications which have changed cultural perspectives and given birth to swathes of activism. Examples include [Rachel Carson's 'Silent Spring'](#) and the [Club of Rome's 'Limits to Growth'](#), which were game changing in moving environmentalism towards exploring systemic solutions.

4. Shallow public engagement

Getting people involved in organisations and actions at a very low level helps to build people's interest and investment. In the environmental movement the organisations with the biggest support - like the RSPB - have been building trust and gaining ground for more than a century.

Having a broad support base means a stable income (through donations) and increasing legitimacy, as organisations like Greenpeace and Stonewall are seen as representative of their supporters. It also means supporters are kept informed about issues and progress, and can participate at a low level in making change happen (through signing petitions to add their power to an institution or campaign, or by increasing their own awareness and understanding, like getting information through interactive maps).

5. Deeper public engagement

Deeper public engagement is also critical. When smaller numbers of people are able to get involved in issues they feel passionately about more deeply, this has helped really increase momentum of movements and led to snowball effects. Good examples of this are the groups of Friends of the Earth, the Gay Liberation Front (GLF), Earth First!, local road protest and fracking site battles, and more recently Extinction Rebellion (XR).

The more recent work Stonewall has been doing to challenge homophobia in schools and bring in intersections such as queer people of colour with campaign trainings showcases more of a leadership building / organising approach. As does the outreach of Extinction Rebellion who gave talks to student and community groups to recruit a critical mass of supporters before launching their first big action². While not traditional organising, many rebel groups which have attracted mass support and grown fast have been often led and joined by people most affected by the issue.

6. Bridge building

When groups who are not natural allies collaborate or act in solidarity with each other - loosely rather than in a formal coalition, the impacts can be big. Excellent examples of this come from site battles, on road protest and proposed fracking sites, where self-identified environmental activists have worked side by side with concerned locals, in these cases with the support of Friends of the Earth.

In the LGBTQ+ movement this has manifested differently but also powerfully, for example through Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners (LGSM) in the 1980s, and Lesbians and Gays support the *Migrants* in the present day. Additionally, umbrella bodies, such as the LGBT Forum, can play an important role in representing a multiplicity of voices from the grassroots.

7. Coalitions

These came up in the research specifically around battles for or against pieces of legislation, such as equal marriage, and seem to be important in getting a diversity of sectoral perspectives to advocate for and against things proposed or actually in law.

8. Policy research

Research has been important in underpinning public campaigns, informing the public about technical detail (which local environmental campaigns have then been able to use), and making cases to business and government for change.

² It is worth noting that Extinction Rebellion has attracted significant criticism for its appeal largely to white middle class people, and lack of a strong climate justice narrative or demands. By referencing it here I'm not intending to suggest that XR is a good example of people most affected by an issue getting involved.

There has been significantly more research on environmental issues, with dedicated think tanks and branches of NGOs devoted to this. In the LGBTQ+ movement there are some important research partnerships between NGOs and universities, but evidence bases for policy have been somewhat lacking, although this hasn't critically impeded the progress of that movement.

There is a question here about the relative importance of research in a complex issue versus a rights based campaign.

9. Insider advocacy

Engaging directly with governments and parliamentarians has led to significant success, [from MP Edwina Currie's trip to the Netherlands with Stonewall](#), which led to the initial reduction in the age of consent for gay men, to the sustained efforts of Friends of the Earth in winning the legislation of the Climate Change Act.

10. Supportive groups inside political parties

Both movements had groups inside the main political parties, slowly building support within them. No doubt these have played an important role in internal advocacy. The presence of the Green Party has also undoubtedly encouraged the other parties to step up their game on environmental issues, ever [since it got 15% of the vote in the 1989 European elections](#), the year when [Thatcher made an impassioned speech on climate change at the UN](#).

Other actors – unions and faith groups

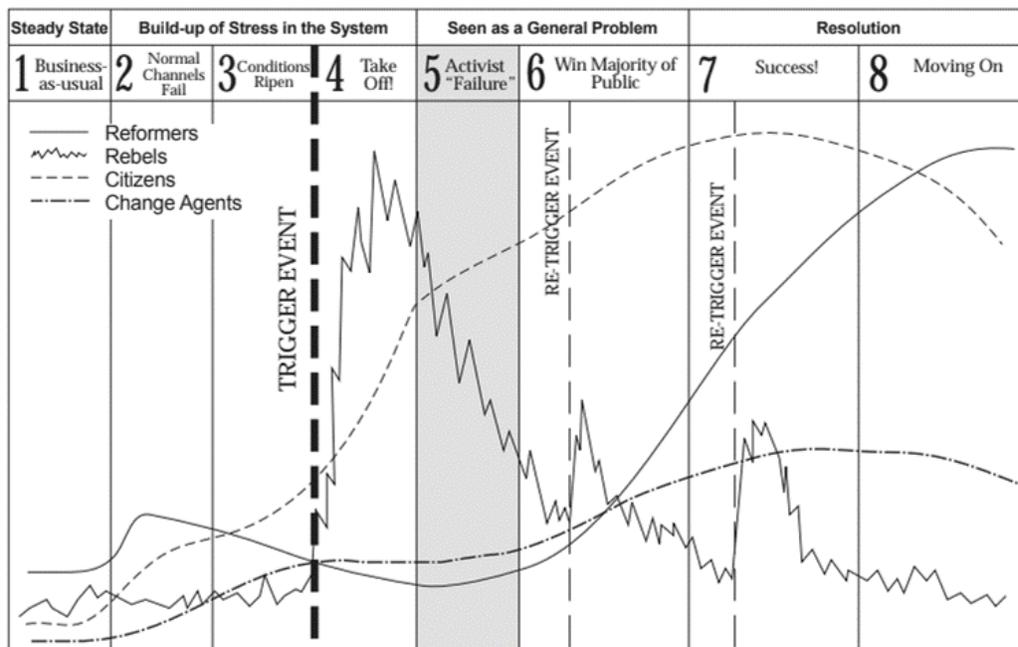
From what I found, unions were useful generally on LGBTQ+ coalitions, but have been split by disagreements of members on the issue of trans rights. Some faith groups have at times actively opposed LGBTQ+ progress, for example on equal marriage, while others supported it. As I didn't find either group to be critical on their own, I haven't included them in my typology - although they may well be important actors, contributing offers in one of the categories I have proposed.

Bill Moyer's MAP model for organising social movements

The Movement Action Plan is a strategic model for waging nonviolent social movements developed by Bill Moyer, a US social change activist.

The Movement Action Plan (MAP), initially developed by Moyer in the late 1970s, uses case studies of successful social movements to illustrate eight distinct stages through social movements' progress, and is designed to help movement activists choose the most effective tactics and strategies to match their movements' current stage.

As shown in the diagram below, Moyer suggested that outsider 'rebel' groups tend to kickstart the awareness of a problem in the minds of 'Citizens' (the public) with headline grabbing direct actions. Then as the energy for this drops away, with the rebels feeling they have failed, the baton is picked up by 'Reformers' (policy /lobbyist types) and 'Change Agents' (campaigners and organisers). Public support is won long before legislative change happens.



The Four Activist Roles - Participation

Adapted from Moyer, Bill. *The Practical Strategist*. San Francisco: Social Movement Empowerment Project, 1990.

My findings in this paper seem to support the broad trends Moyer identified, although these play out over varying lengths of time and are cyclical rather than linear. As he depicts in the four roles in the diagram above, I found that rebel activity takes off around trigger events, and public awareness grows as media coverage does. Then when the rebels feel they are starting to fail, reformers pick up the baton forging a less radical version of what is being called for into legislation, with re-trigger events /spikes in rebel activity along the way.

Since Moyer was a forerunner in proposing a simplified movement typology, I thought it worth mentioning his work here – but I've only given it the briefest nod to move onto the findings of this research. I would recommend his book *'Doing Democracy'* to those interested in exploring further.

Emerging insights

As well as the movement typology I suggest above, the research prompted some further insights from comparing the two movements:

Changing public attitudes don't always lead to legislative change

Although changing attitudes often prompt legislation to follow, public opinion is sometimes ignored by democratic representatives, and alternative routes are therefore sought to make the change. For example with homosexuals in the military, despite 68% of the UK public wanting the ban to be dropped, this fell even in UK courts and campaigners had to go to the European court to succeed.

Intersectional struggles may seem new but they've been repeating for a long time

This is particularly true in the LGBT movement - originally just the LG (Lesbian & Gay) movement, trans issues being advocated on separately before being taken up by Stonewall and others. The marginalisation of lesbians by gay men has a long history, with women's groups splitting from the Gay Liberation Front (GLF), Lesbians and Gays support the Miners (LGSM) etc. It is notable that much more lesbian activism became visible in the 1980s, a decade when many male gay activists were less active because they were directly impacted by AIDs.

]

People of colour have also been marginalised in the LGBTQ+ movement, leading to the creation of Black Pride and dedicated identity focused community groups. These issues also have a significant (although less visible) history in the environmental movement.

Movements owe broad legacies to historical progress made, and tactics used, on other issues

For example, the [peace movement and occupations like Greenham Common](#) inspired the many site based occupations of the climate movement. The emergence of the GLF in the US (preceding it's birth in the UK) was supported by the Black Liberation Movement, with a Black Panther conference recognising the additional repression of homosexuals.

Although sometimes big organisations lead campaigns from the beginning, mostly issues are picked up from grassroots rebels

The Climate Change Act is one obvious exception, driven as it was by Friends of the Earth. But most of the monumental campaigns I looked at came from grassroots rebel activity - lowering the age of consent for gay men, challenging section 28, protesting the huge road building plans of the 1990s. Later they were picked up by big NGOs and a broad range of activity led to success. Over time, cycles of outsider action re-radicalising the NGO sector, putting new issues (and old ones back) on agenda, are obvious in both movements.

Struggles are often long, with success coming in years and decades

Campaigns are not generally won in years (with some exceptions, [like the disposal of the Brent Spar oil rig](#)). Big changes generally happen over more than a decade. For example, the section 28 legislation was passed in 1988 and despite fierce campaigning wasn't repealed until 2003, then a public apology for it was finally issued in 2009, more than 20 years later.

Incremental /wedge issues sometimes work

Not everything lends itself to incremental change. But it can sometimes be very effective - for example in the case of civil partnership being eventually followed by legislation for full equal marriage.

Tactics and campaigns can repeat and win

For example, the street parties of reclaim the streets have their roots in a liberal group protesting in the 50s and 60s, then revived in the 90s becoming a huge movement linked to the success of the road protests. The creative and symbolic protests of the GLF inspired the lesbian avengers of the following decade and much later creative, disruptive protest.

Owning your own media is important

Most grassroots struggles have raised awareness and built support through their own media, from the self distributed manifesto and newspaper of the GLF in the 70s to the proliferation of zines in the 80s and 90s and the websites and social media of more contemporary campaigns. Mainstream as well as margins are important here, with the two movements launching the Ecologist magazine and the Gay Times as milestone in both histories.

The impact of big external events like the financial crisis is very significant and far reaching

From the impact this had on the income of charities to the way it has shaped culture, government policy and ideas about what is possible, the impacts from 2008 are still unfolding and will be significant for years if not decades to come.

Perceived failure can lead to massively increased activism & ramp up pressure *or* have a depressing effect; sometimes both with a gap in between

When negative legislation is passed or projects go ahead, this can hugely increase immediate resistance leading to a win - on road protests this win was quite quick (only a few years); on section 28 it took 16. Or alternately it can have a depressing effect, like the climate change conference COP in 2009.

Think tanks and research have been much more important for the complexities of environmental than LGBTQ+ issues

Perhaps this may be connected to that fact that the environment cannot advocate for itself and is a complex system rather than an identity group? But this is just my own speculation.

International movements and struggles spread

The GLF and Friends of the Earth both came from the US originally. Groups like Earth First! and issues like equal marriage have spread across borders relatively quickly. But in comparison to Equal Marriage, action on the climate is much harder, as countries feel it could be damaging economically to go alone and properly legislate.

Movement success is tied to its complementarity with the prevailing global capitalist economic model

In comparing these two movements, I've continually asked myself why LGBTQ+ struggles have made such significant progress while so many environmental struggles are losing badly (despite many wins along the way). One stand out reason seems to be that the queer community do not threaten global economics. Companies can sponsor Pride and come out in support of trans rights far more easily than they can move to business models which stop extracting and polluting. The transformative cultural change necessary for progress on LGBTQ+ rights has been possible within global neoliberal capitalism, but so far it seems the systemic shifts to address climate change, mass extinction, pollution and over consumption are not.

Interviewees & Bibliography

Environmental interviews

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Jim MacSweeney, Managers, Gay's the Word (bookshop)

Robbie De Santos, Head of Campaigns, Stonewall

Zayna Ratty, Community liaison officer Oxford Pride / Founder at LGBTQ Asylum

Paul Roberts, CEO, LGBT Consortium

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No Bath, Plenty of Bubbles, Lisa Power, Cassell, 1995

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Appendix 1:

LGBTQ+ movement summary

1970-2019

Below is a summary of headlines from the UK LGBTQ+ movement in the UK, telling the story of those involved from the perspective of their roles in the movement typology 1970 – 2019

Pre-1970

In 1967 the UK decriminalised sex acts by gay men in private; in reality this led to a police crack down on gay men around the borders of public and private.

The main campaigning organisation coming out of the 60s was CHE (Campaign for Homosexual Equality), leading the 'homophile' movement.

1970s

Rebels

The GLF (Gay Liberation Front) formed in 1970, coming out of the LSE and beginning with a 'kiss in' protesting an arrest of two gay men for public indecency in London. It quickly spreads across the country, with more than six groups in other UK cities in 1971. The activism was public and performative, taking aim at homophobic books, psychologists claiming they could 'cure' homosexuals, and the state law/ police repression. It also had a strong celebratory lifestyle element, drawing huge numbers to 'gay days' in parks, and starting Pride in 1971, with many organisers living in communes and experimenting with different ways of living.

Women felt largely marginalised from the start and lesbians formally split from the GLF in 1972, as it tended to be dominated by gay men - although some actions, such as the huge 'Miss Trial' demonstration at Miss World, were closely aligned with the women's movement. By the time it dissolved in 1973 it had a huge impact, and those involved went on to other projects within the movement - like the formation of the Lesbian and Gay switchboard.

Media

The GLF was very successful in generating its own widely read alternative media. 10k copies of the GLF manifesto were sold in 1971. The GLF media workshop developed its own broadsheet put together by multiple contributors, 1971 - 1973. In 1972 Gay News was founded by CHE and GLF - the first gay publication ordinary people could order from their newsagents, with a circulation of 20k by 1976.

It was also successful at getting coverage in more mainstream news - GLF's first action was covered in the Evening Standard, street theatre drew double page spreads in the Daily Mirror, and by the Bow Street 'Miss Trial' demonstration the GLF was being featured in BBC TV news.

Homosexuals started to be featured in popular culture, with a 1974 lesbian affair broadcast in a Radio 4 drama (although this was preceded with an on air warning), and a 1978 documentary about gays speaking up on censorship in the media.

1979 saw the opening of bookshop 'Gay's the Word' on Marchmont street London, about to celebrate its 40th birthday.

Political parties

1975 saw the formation of the Gay Labour Caucus, organising fringe meetings and Labour conferences. It changed its name to the Labour Campaign for Gay Rights, later including Lesbians as well.

1980s

With the start of the AIDS crisis in 1982, lots of gay activists were affected and lesbians did a lot of supporting work. The decade also saw the introduction of the notorious section 28 clause preventing the promotion of homosexuality in schools - this inspired and reinvigorated protest and the formalising of movement advocacy into institutions.

Rebels

Act Up started in the UK, inspired by the US activist group, advocating for just treatment of HIV and AIDS, using radical tactics and led by many personally affected. This is a prime example of impacted people taking ownership of an issue affecting them, creating conditions for eventual massive change in terms of HIV treatment.

Section 28 also spawned significant lesbian activism, with groups calling themselves 'rebel dykes' or 'lesbian avengers' using the playful tactics and visual symbolism of the GLF - climbing on top of double decker buses and painting them pink; invading and occupying the BBC 6 O'clock news chanting 'stop section 28'; abseiling into the House of Lords.

Elsewhere in a convergence of the peace movement and the green movement, many lesbians took leadership roles in the women's occupation of Greenham common protesting the nuclear air base.

And with the miners strike in the background, as made famous by the film *Pride*, Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners was formed as a solidarity group - splitting into Lesbians Against Pit Closures when women felt they were marginalised in the main group.

Media

Printing press collectives continued to publish alternative media, and the more mainstream gay media flourished. At the turn of the decade London Weekend Television made 'Gay Life' tv series. But then the breaking of the AIDS crisis in 1982 started a sustained media panic and demonisation of those with the disease, leading to growing unpopularity of lesbian and gay people throughout the decade. In 1987 the soap *Eastenders* showed its first gay kiss and had a storyline around the age of consent issue (as men still had to be 21). This creating a media backlash - e.g. *The Sun* ran the headline 'Eastbenders'. In 1988 actor Ian McKellen came out.

Sector structure

1988 saw the formation of OLGA (Organisation for lesbian & gay action), then in 1989 Stonewall was founded, responding to section 28 campaigning. It was originally set up by elites in the LG movement, and pursued an initial assimilationist approach, working with media to combat the growing stigma. Later it picked up campaigning on the age of consent issue highlighted by *Eastenders*. The Terrence Higgins Trust was also founded, named after the first gay man in the UK to die of AIDS.

In 1989 Unite (then the transport and general workers union) began to move motions on employment rights for lesbian and gay community.

1990s

This decade saw a slew of progress and positive legislation. In 1994 the male homosexual age of consent was lowered to from 21 to 18. In 1997 a court ruling was passed against discrimination against same sex adopters.

In 1993 a social attitudes survey showed 50% believed sexual relations between the same sex were always wrong - and a further 14 % said mostly wrong. But by 1995 the public had recovered from their HIV jitters, with now a minority saying homosexual relations were wrong and 23% saying they were now more tolerant.

Campaigners exhausted their UK court challenges on the ban of gays in the military - they took the fight to the European court of human rights 1999 and won - public polling at the time showed 68% thought the ban should be lifted.

Combination therapies finally became available to treat HIV, after over a decade of campaigning.

Rebels

1990 saw the formation of Outrage, responding to anti-gay murders in West London with a programme of civil disobedience and the slogans "Protection, not persecution!" and "Policing without prejudice."

Space based activism continued around social centres in cities producing their own 'zines', such as the POC gay and lesbian centre and women's centre in Southwark.

Sector structure and advocacy

In 1992 Stonewall took Conservative MP Edwina Currie to the Netherlands as part of their campaigning on the age of consent - in the Netherlands ages of consent for homosexual and heterosexual sex have been equal since the 1970s. The trip was featured in BBC documentary 'A Question of Consent'. Currie became a new ally in Parliament and in 1994 sponsored the amendment to the criminal justice bill which succeeded in reducing, but not equalising, the UK age of consent.

1998 the LGB consortium was founded, as senior leaders from other organisations wanted an umbrella body to represent the growing sector. In the late 1990s Stonewall came on board with the campaign advocating for gays in the military.

Political parties

In 1994 the gay age of consent was reduced from 21 to 18 under the Conservative Government. Tony Blair made a famous speech declaring there was 'nothing wrong with being gay', and under Ken Livingstone the GLC gave significant funding to LGBT community organisations. Then in 1998 the New Labour government tabled the bill to equalise the age of consent, but it fell at the Lords twice. It finally passed in 2000, reducing the gay age of consent to 16, but only by Parliament invoking Parliament Act to silence objections of Lords.

Media

Lesbian and gay culture and characters became much more mainstream with TV host Graham Norton, the Brookside lesbian kiss in 1994 and the Queer As Folk TV series. In 1999 a BBC breakfast presenter came out in the Daily Mail, and Robert Kilroy Silk came out, in support of the campaign to drop the ban on gay people in the military.

Faith groups

The Catholic church ran their 'keep the clause' campaign opposing dropping the ban on gays in the military.

2000s

The noughties saw even more positive legislation, beginning with lifting the ban on gays in the military and equal ages of consent. More inclusive LGBT language began to be widely used.

2002: equal adoption and fostering rights.

2003: Section 28 (banning encouragement of homosexuality in schools) was finally repealed.

2003: Increased penalties for homosexual hate crimes introduced.

2004: Gender Recognition Act gave trans people the right to self-identify. While it medicalised gender and excluded non binary people, it was the first legislation of its kind in the world.

2004: Civil partnership act gave homosexual couples the right to marry - 50k married this way by the end of the decade.

2004 and 2010: Equality Acts against discrimination - think tank the Equality Trust and others were instrumental in this.

Rebels

UK black pride was set up by group of black lesbians, rejecting the growing assimilationist norms of pride and championing those feeling marginalised such as POC, trans, bi etc. Lady Phyll was one of the founders. Generally trans and bi movements, grassroots and community organisations, were growing in this time.

Sector structure and advocacy

The LGB consortium became the LGBT consortium. Press for Change, the trans organisation championing campaigning and advocacy on the GRA, burnt out in the process, leading to trans issues being picked up by Stonewall.

In 2007 - Stonewall ran the iconic advertising campaign 'Some People are gay. Get over it', aimed at ending bullying in schools.

Political parties

In 2009 David Cameron issued a public apology for section 28.

Faith groups

Civil partnership legislation saw concerted opposition by churches, especially on the religious right. But Quakers, unitarians, liberal and reform jews wanted to be able to solemnise same sex marriage, and were very supportive. Schools have been a big flashpoint, around relationship and sex education, as lots of faith groups have associated schools.

2010s

2013 - Saw same sex marriage become legal in England and Wales; and in 2014 in Scotland. It is still being blocked by the DUP in Northern Ireland.

Rebels

Now many battles have been won in mainstreaming homosexuality and assimilating it into society, and we're seeing much stronger *identity specific* grassroots mobilisation, activism and support run by small unpaid community organisations around the country. Activist groups like LGSM (Lesbians and Gays support the Migrants) and African Rainbow Family are active on migrant rights and LGBT+ refugees.

In 2012 Act Up restarted to draw attention to existing health inequalities around HIV. Queer Tours of London are bringing the history of LGBTQ+ liberation to life. The GLF are reforming with a new list of demands, aiming to reclaim Pride.

Campaigning NGOs

Stonewall is by far the biggest NGO in the sector with an annual turnover of around £8m, and an approach combining elite advocacy with more grassroots organising to change attitudes. The [Coalition for Equal Marriage](#) was formed in response to the [Coalition for Marriage](#), arguing for a reversal on civil partnership laws. In pushing through legislation on equal marriage Whitehall roundtables were held with Stonewall, the LGBT consortium, and the LGBT foundation (a large Manchester Organisation). In NI the Rainbow network, Cara Friend & the LGBT Consortium are still fighting.

The recent consultation on the Gender Recognition Act was campaigned on by Stonewall, sharing 100 major businesses supporting its demands for trans rights, and online feminist organisations like Level Up designed a quick way for the public to respond to key questions.

The broader sector is flourishing

Besides Stonewall there are 5 smaller organisations with a turnover over £1m+ PA, and 325 members of the LGBT consortium, but this is just the tip of the iceberg with 100s more community organisations. Top issues being worked on include health inequalities, crime & safety, 121 advocacy and counselling, as well as refugee issues and growing numbers of social group organisations. To give a few examples:

- The Outside Project is focusing on homelessness as 1/3 homeless youth are LGBT
- UK LGIG – Lawyers for LGBT migrants / LGBTQ asylum
- Pink therapy

Media

There is lots of sensationalist anti trans media coverage, but this is fuelling activism on the margins and in sector. Gay media, culture, and bars tend to be dominated by white, cis, gay men, and there is a sense the broader battle has been won, as that's true for this group.

Political parties

All major parties now have LGBT chapters, except UKIP. It did have an LGBT chapter but members resigned after homophobic comments at party conference and the launch of a new right wing manifesto which pledges to oppose LGBT-inclusive primary school education,

explaining: “UKIP opposes gender confusion ideologies and the implementation of compulsory LGBT-inclusive relationships education in primary schools.”

Unions

Unions have been part of key legislative moments – they tend to join broader coalitions and are often good at organising members to get involved. Most of the key unions have passed democratic motions in support of trans rights, but proactive advocacy is hampered by tensions between LGBT networks and anti-trans individuals in positions of influence.

Research

There are prominent academics, for example on LGBT public health issues and women's studies. Stonewall has a partnership with Cambridge University the LGBT Foundation has a partnership with the University of Manchester, but there are no think tanks working on LGBT issues.

Appendix 2: Environmental movement summary

1970 - 2019

Below is a summary of headlines from the UK environmental movement in the UK, telling the story of those involved from the perspective of their roles in the movement typology 1970 – 2019.

Pre-1970

The UK actually passed the world's 1st ever environmental legislation, prohibiting burning of sea coal in 1273. In 1865 - The Commons, Open Spaces and Footpaths preservation society was formed, making it the world's 1st environmental group. In the 1890s The National Trust, RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds) and the Royal Society for Nature Conservation were formed, followed by the CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England) in 1926. Although these organisations had roots in radical, populist or liberal ideas, most had settled into a comfortable rut by the 1940s and 1950s. Typically their membership consisted of well-meaning middle or lower middle class ramblers, country house buffs and hobby naturalists.

Then the 1960s counter culture took environmentalism to its heart, and there was some effective anti-road campaigning in the 50s and 60s (e.g. rerouting the M1). Rachel Carson's book 'The Silent Spring' had significant impact, published in 1962. The late 60s saw a wave of legislation - the wilderness act 64, clean water act 65, the wild and scenic rivers act 68. At the end of the 60s the RSPB had 30k members.

1970s

Rebels to NGOs

1971 - 1973 saw Reclaim the streets action and 'bike ins' run by a young liberal group, drawing on use of the peace movement's NVDA (Non Violent Direct Action) of the 50s and 60s, and demanding free public transport / car free streets.

Friends of the Earth was founded in the UK in 1971, starting with a protest at Schweppes for using non returnable bottles by dumping 1,500 of them on its doorstep. It was characterised from the start by belief in participatory democracy and loose, decentralised organisation, inspired by student movements. By 1973 there were 70 FoE groups across the UK. In its early days FoE had pay parity with all staff earning the same, although this was scrapped in 1981.

Greenpeace was founded in 1977 with a very different approach - a rigid hierarchy and in contrast to participation delivered its own elite activism to significant media attention. By 1979 it had 30k members.

Research

The Club of Rome published the hugely influential 'Limits to Growth' in 1972 and British environmentalists responded with 'Blueprint for Survival' (BFS), which analysed the consequences of the continued, exponential exploitation of the world's resources, concluding planet was heading towards an ecological crisis.

In 1979 the Green Alliance was formed - a charity and think tank set up to 'inject an ecological perspective into the political life of Britain.'

Media

The first edition of The Ecologist magazine was published in 1970. Throughout the 1970s and into the 80s environmental groups had extensive media contacts and won growing coverage in the press, on radio and on tv in that order. The Times coverage of environmental stories alone increased by 281% 1965 - 1973.

Politics

In 1972 governments discussed the human environment together as a global issue for the first time at a UN conference in Stockholm.

In 1973 the Socialist Environment Resources Association (SERA) started promoting "sustainable environmental policies within government and the Labour Party." This was joined by the Conservative and Liberal Ecology Groups, set up in 1977. It would take a while for these groups to significantly influence their parties - when the environment was mentioned at all in the major party manifestos this decade, it was narrowly defined and low on the agenda.

The Ecology Party was set up in 1975, later becoming the Green Party.

1980s

In 1981 the wildlife and countryside act was passed, focused on the protection of birds. Environmental groups, especially the RSPB, were quite influential, helped by the decreasing influence of the farming lobby.

1988 saw the start of the green consumer revolution, and growing support for environmental issues.

Flourishing NGO sector

A 1981-82 survey showed the total membership of environmental organisations was 2.3 - 3 million (4.5 - 5.3% of the population - by 1990 this had grown to 4.5 million (8%).

Friends of the Earth branched out to the private sector, working with companies to advise them directly as an environmental consultant.

It was also a decade that heralded the globalisation of environmental issues. In the 80s membership of WWF, the only UK international focused environmental NGO, grew 300%. Coalition working started to produce advocacy papers focused domestically and wider, like 'Blueprint for a green europe' in 1989, by FoE, CPRE, WWF & the Green Alliance.

1984 saw the formation of NEF (the New economics Foundation), a think tank which described it's work as 'developing an economics which puts people and planet first.'

Media

Early in the decade, few national newspapers had their own environment or planning correspondents; between 1988 and 1989 alone, the number of national papers with environmental correspondents grew from five to twelve.

Politics

The 1987 Conservative manifesto bundled a few things under 'plan for a better society' - greenbelt protection, nuclear power, pollution control etc. Labour still saw the environment as too middle class an issue. In 1989 the Green Party got 15% of the vote at the European elections, showing how popular concern for the environment had become. Margaret Thatcher, then Conservative Prime Minister, gave an impassioned speech about the dangers of climate change to a UN general assembly in 1989, but didn't follow through on this with significant action.

1990s

1990 - saw the publication of the environmental white paper 'This common inheritance', containing protections for hedgerows and countryside, and the formation of the Ministerial energy efficiency committee.

In 1992 UK politicians were forced by public concern to attend the Rio Earth summit. 1993 saw the first first legal challenge against river pollution (brought by FoE). In 1995 the disposal of the Brent Spar oil storage buoy was huge news.

Rebels

The 90s was a significant decade for new rebel activity. Earth First! Formed in spring 1991 - led by two students previously active in FoE, Greenpeace and the Green Party, who became critical of them and sought a new approach, combining the perspective of deep ecology with direct action. Their first action was the occupation of Dungeness power station, and then they focused on rainforests and UK timber imports, until shifting to oppose road building campaigns in 1992. By 1996 there were 63 Earth First! autonomous local groups across the UK, and groups formed in Australia, the US, Ireland, Germany, France, Holland, and Eastern Europe.

In response to the government's road building schemes (first set out in the Conservative 1989 white paper) huge protests started in 1992. These were coordinated by radical activists and local people worried about local impacts - FoE played a major role in building bridges between the two. There was a strategy of staging iconic and symbolic campaigns, occupying woodlands with treehouses and networks of tunnels making protestors difficult to shift. By 1996 there were 6 major road protest sites. Although many of these immediate battles were lost, the Government scrapped plans to build 300 more roads, meaning overall the campaigns were hugely successful.

The "Reclaim the Streets" party and protest movement grew out of Twyford and M11 road protests - they had held 15 parties by mid 1996, with up to 8k participants in just one party. There was significant frame bridging between anti roads protests and the animal liberation movement.

The NGO sector

The big organisations of the decade were formed many years before - CPRE, FoE (lobbying and organising), The Green Alliance (lobbying), Greenpeace, The National Trust, The RSPB, The WWF - (awareness raising).

In 1990: there were 1500 organisations 'concerned in some way with the environment', many of which were governmental or international with specialised interests. Excluding these left 65 national NGOs and 62 local groups (mainly county wildlife and naturalists trusts) and 16 regional groups. By 1990, these NGOs were more influential on government policy, being consulted for input more often.

Friends of the Earth, as well as supporting road protests, focused centrally on rainforests, water, energy, and air pollution - a classic set of single issues. It also had 250 local groups and activists networks creating their own agenda. The National Trust hit 1 million members in the 1990s, although the RSPB was the biggest purely conservation organisation with 400k members in 1997, rivalled by environmental activists Greenpeace with 411k members in 1996. Surfers Against Sewage also formed this decade and grew fast with 23k members by 1996.

In 1996 the Green Alliance Hosted Tony Blair's first environmental speech (before he became PM). Forum for the Future (FF) founded in 1996, with the intention of helping companies and public sector bodies understand sustainable development, helping organisations develop products and services which are environmentally sound, socially just and economically viable.

Media

The culture of the rave movement and the advent of mobile phones and the internet supported a new era of DIY organising and media for rebel groups.

Greenpeace in 1990 had a press office of four staff, and a written public information department responding to 140,000 written requests for information each year. In 1995 Greenpeace occupied the leaking Brent Spar oil storage buoy and took dramatic footage to protest Shell's plans to dump the remaining oil into sea. The organisation had its own expensive photographers, videographers and editors in the 1990s - and made the mainstream news media reliant on their footage, uploading it via satellites. E.g. took ITV on a boat to Brent Spar but said they had to use their film - which meant coverage was framed according the Greenpeace narrative. Boycotts of Shell petrol stations started across Europe and Shell reversed their decision to dump the Brent Spar platform at the fury of Government.

Friends of the Earth made excellent use of the internet with their toxic tips campaign which used information from national river authorities to produce the first ever campaigning digital map. This featured in the Observer magazine with a coupon people could cut out and post to FoE to sign up - thousands did.

And the road protests drew huge news coverage in papers and on television. One protester, known as 'Swampy', became an icon, better known, at least briefly, than many TV presenters and cabinet ministers.

2000s

Rebels

There was a huge amount of new energy again pouring into the environmental movement, with the emergence of 10 'climate camps' from 2006 - 2010 across the UK (and a handful more in Europe, Canada and New Zealand). These drew on the heritage of protest camps like Greenham Common and those of the anti roads movement, modelling sustainable and community based living and radical flat structured organising in the way they were run, at the same time as taking mass direct actions on fossil fuel infrastructure. This was in the context of the wider anti globalisation movement, peaking in the UK in 2005 when the G8 summit was hosted at Gleneagles.

NGO sector

The decade was significant for Friends of the Earth, with many wins. The late 1990s/ early 2000s saw the arrival of genetically modified crops / foods. FoE went in early with 'frankenstein foods' messaging and condemned the new technology, coordinating major protests like removing GM products from supermarkets. Lots of supermarkets quickly fell in line and stopped stocking GM.

In 2000, after local groups successfully ran their own kerbside recycling schemes, FoE started campaigning for a recycling bill, which was passed in 2003.

In 2004 FoE kicked off campaigning for a Climate change act with their 'Big Ask' campaign, narrowing the organisational focus onto this across brand, marketing, comms, celebs, events, groups, lobbying etc. The Climate Change Act passed into law in 2008.

In 2000 FoE published their own book 'Towards tomorrow's world' - a big thought piece. The organisation had its own think tank in house, the sustainable research unit, which had 4-5 staff in addition to each campaign teams' senior research officers. But in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis, FoE restructured and got rid of the research office roles, from then on outsourcing most research.

There were huge protests in London and Copenhagen around the 2009 COP, attempting to reach a global agreement, but this failed - although it also helped to launch 350.org, the new global climate change focused organisation.

Politics

2000 saw Blair's 1st green speech as prime minister, again hosted by the Green Alliance. In 2008 Gordon Brown created DECC (the Department for Energy and Climate Change), which was sadly dissolved in 2016.

In 2006 David Cameron visited the Arctic to witness the effects of climate change firsthand, and when elected to coalition Government in 2010 he promised it would be 'the greenest government ever' - but these promises did not significantly materialise.

The Green Party also won its first Parliamentary seat, with Caroline Lucas elected to Brighton Pavilion in 2010.

2010s

Rebels

Climate Rush started the decade with some interesting performative activism, celebrating the anniversary of the suffragettes. Reclaim the Power picked up the legacy of the climate camp movement, taking NVDA, getting significant attention in social media and mainstream press. With threats of fracking across the UK we've also seen a powerful anti-fracking movement emerge, drawing on the legacy of road protest camps with radical activists and concerned locals working together.

More recently Extinction Rebellion has burst into the media spotlight with mass NVDA actions aimed at getting people arrested to force government action on climate change. The backstory to the movement is two years of travelling around the country, introducing the project, asking for public support and getting people to sign pledges to build up the initial critical mass to take action. Following initial actions and huge public support (as well as significant criticism from other activist groups and NGOs), Extinction Rebellion now has a small staffed team and an expanding set of volunteer roles.

The global children's strike for the climate, in the wake of the IPCC report, is also spreading to the UK. While welcoming it, some activists were initially critical of using language suggesting children in the global north are the main victims (in terms of intergenerational justice) as

serious impacts are already being felt in the global south. But this has since been corrected by the students organising themselves, and they have formed a new but growing organisation - UK Student Climate Network (UKSCN), to support their organising efforts.

NGOs

There remain a spread of environmental NGOs split between conservation (WWF, RSPB etc), and broader systemic environmental concern (FoE, Greenpeace, 350 straddling also more radical working). There has also been significant campaigning on climate change from a development perspective led by organisations like CAFOD and Christian Aid.

One big win happened towards the start of the decade when campaigners reversed the decision to sell off the UK's forests. Campaigning was led by the Woodland Trust but gained mass public support through collaboration with 38 Degrees. There have been significant wins from similar coalitions related to bee killing pesticides, but new generations of pesticides and lack of more holistic analysis may wipe out this progress.

Media

Soaring temperatures in 2018 led to the Sun newspaper putting headlines about climate change on its front page. The BBC documentary Blue Planet catapulted the issue of ocean plastic to the top of the political agenda, and NGOs subsequently picked this up, although larger ones like Friends of the Earth were slower to move than Surfers Against Sewage. Campaigning on plastic has translated into a 50% drop in the use of single use plastic from 2018 – 2019.

Politics

Although there are only modest differences between Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat voters on climate change, the divide in the policies of the parties is stark. The incumbent Conservative Government has done little positive on the environment and has had a devastating impact on the UK renewable sector by abolishing subsidies for wind and solar. In contrast, in the gap where bigger NGOs were reluctant to engage with the Labour party under Corbyn's leadership, Mika Minio-Paulello from NGO Platform wrote much of Labour's energy manifesto last year. UKIP deny the existence of human caused climate change.