

Camp for Climate Action

Neighbourhood Media Pack 2010

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1. Introduction

Every battle we fight is a battle for the hearts and minds of other people. One of the best chances we have of reaching people who haven't yet heard what we've got to say yet is through the media. We might, with good reason, regard the papers and broadcasters with extreme suspicion. But if we are clever about it, not only can we not get exploited by the media through engaging with them – but we can actually, sometimes, get a clear and persuasive message across. This might mean understanding just what to say in that 6am phone interview, or where to send the photographs of your mates sitting on a forklift truck. Either way, a little preparation goes a long way.

This guide is about just that.

1.1 What we're up against

Triviality

Every media outlet shares the same principal aim: to expand its share of the market. It does this by seeking to grab and hold onto people's attention. This is why the media concentrates so much on events rather than issues, and especially trivial, flashy and colourful events. Most journalists are convinced that people can't concentrate for more than a few seconds. This is mainly because they themselves can't concentrate for more than a few seconds.

On the face of it, this is a major disadvantage for us, as our aim is to make people aware of big and important issues.

Bias

Many outlets have a secondary aim: pandering to the prejudices of their proprietors. As most large news-gathering organisations are run by perverse billionaires whose interests are at odds with those of the rest of society, this makes life still harder for us.

But there are often a surprising number of opportunities for making use of other parts of the right-wing media: some of the things that occasionally slip past the editors' noses at the Telegraph and Sunday Telegraph, for example, are pretty unexpected. While their editors and proprietors may be total bastards, a lot of journalists are not bad people, just weak and cowardly. Many of them want to help, and will look for opportunities to do so without upsetting their bosses.

Newspapers are allowed to be partisan, and expected to be by their readers. But the broadcast media are legally obliged to look balanced and fair. In practice, as we know, this isn't always the case. More importantly, their concept of fairness is a narrow one: as long as both Labour and Tory politicians have had their say, balance is seen to have been achieved, even if the view from Westminster represents just a tiny part of the political spectrum.

Most broadcast outlets are also very conscious of the views of their advertisers, and even more trashy than the printed ones. The result is, once again, conservatism: broadcast journalists appear to be terrified of telling their audience something it doesn't know already.

'The Game'

Another way in which we're up against it is that we take our campaigns seriously, while interviewers tend to see their work as a game, whose political outcome is immaterial, but which must be played by a set of rules. These rules are, at first sight, obscure to people without a lot of media experience. If you don't play by the rules, it's a foul and you're sent off. As our only objective is to win, regardless of etiquette, we tend to foul more often than other contributors. As a result, sometimes we come across very badly.

That's the bad news, but there's also plenty of good news: we have several significant advantages over our opponents.

1.2 What we've got going for us

Integrity

We're genuine people, not hired hacks defending a corporate or institutional position. This shows when we allow it to: an open and straightforward appeal to people's concerns and fears about climate change can cut through the clamour of self-interest and spin-doctoring with a powerful resonance. When we keep our message uncluttered and get straight to the point, we can be devastatingly effective.

Articulating Public Sentiment

People are increasingly prepared to listen to what we have to say on the climate, and on the economy: it's becoming all too obvious that things are going badly wrong, and could be very much better. Alongside this, hard as it may be to believe, a lot of mainstream journalists are secretly sympathetic to the causes we espouse, and realise that we can articulate things that, most of the time, other sources either can't or won't.

Inherent media friendliness

We're colourful, fun, outlandish and outrageous. With cakes, clowns, bunting and shit-hot direct action, we know how to pack a punch with a smile. Much as television executives might claim to hate us, television cameras love us.

2. Dealing with the media circus

2.1 Getting coverage of your action

Climate Camp has a really good history of managing the media well. This means not tacking media work onto actions as an afterthought, but understanding that media work is integral to an action. However, reaching the media is as time-consuming, as demanding and as necessary as building lock-ons or digging tunnels, and has to be tackled with the efficiency and creativity that we bring to the rest of our work.

Setting up a media team

This means that every action aimed at altering public opinion ideally has a media team or media co-ordinator whose job is to ensure that the activists' point of view reaches the wider world. This includes:

- planning a press strategy
- drawing up a hit-list of journalists
- briefing spokespeople
- someone who stays behind to write and despatch up-to- the-minute press releases
- people who will meet and escort the journalists who come to an action.

Handling the press can be pretty daunting. To do the job well, you need to be confident, sociable and pretty mouthy. At least one person on the team should be able to write well. But media skills, like any others, can be learnt, and surprisingly quickly. Just don't take on too much as an individual - this can lead to you being profiled as a "ringleader", which isn't good for the movement, puts you at risk of injunction and isn't as fun!

Press account and contact details

The first thing you should do is set up an email account that will be the base for all your media relations. This will be where journalists can contact the campaign, and from where you will send out press releases. You might need to use something like SquirrelMail which allows you to send press releases to many contacts at the same time – most email providers have a limit on this to stop spam.

Additionally it is worthwhile getting an old phone from somewhere and putting in a new sim card and designating that as a media phone. If you have a website it may be a good idea to place the email address and media phone number clearly placed on the website.

The press list

The press list is probably one of the most basic things you must have to get your media operation up and running. The press list contains all the contact details of different press agencies, broadcasting companies and journalists that you will use to try and get your messages and events across to. It is a good idea to have the press list saved in the drafts folder of your press email account at all times. The press list should always ideally be ordered alphabetically so you can easily add, delete and check who is on your list.

Local News

Every journalist in every national paper deals with hundreds, if not thousands, of phone calls and emails every week. This is not, however, true of local news. Local newspapers can play an invaluable role in getting small stories to a wide, varied and relatively large audience. Local journalists are under different but perhaps even greater pressures. Some cover more than one paper and have to fill pages. This means that ANYTHING that happens in an area or ANYTHING that someone from an area does is potentially news. Local media also reaches people who just don't see national media.

Making contacts

Most journalists are also astoundingly unimaginative: they don't want to touch an issue unless it's already been mentioned in the press. If you can pull it off (and it's not always possible), it's very useful to get a friendly and trustworthy journalist to flag the action up a week or two beforehand, without giving too much away. Climate change may be in the press every day, but that doesn't mean journalists are going to understand the nuances of arguments about agro-fuels or carbon trading.

The best way to achieve this is to find your journalist and create an atmosphere of secrecy, excitement and intrigue, which only that journalist (or, as a maximum, two or three journalists) is privy to. All journalists love to imagine they're in the Famous Five. Be very nice to them and make them think they're part of the gang. Inviting them along on an action is a great way to make them feel all the more part of the fun. And while they're with you, get them to understand the politics of what you're doing.

Following up

It's a good idea to write down the names and numbers of all the journalists you meet, and maybe make a brief note of what they're like and how they treated the subject. If you're going to be involved in a long campaign, keep the sympathetic ones informed about it every so often, so that when the next event comes up, they won't have forgotten what it's all about. Share your contact lists and experiences with people in other campaigns: it could help them a lot.

2.2 Dealing with the Media at Camp

Take them round the site, show them what you want them to see, and steer them away from what you don't want them to see. Introduce them to the people who'll get on well with them, and keep them away from the people who won't be able to restrain their contempt. If it doesn't seem like a major intrusion on their privacy, stay with them, in a friendly way, and talk them through everything they see.

2.3 Key messages

Keep it simple - think of no more than 3 points that you want to get across. Too many points confuse the listener and make the issue sound complicated.

Your key messages should be said over and over and over again, rephrased a little each time. When it comes to it, you might be tempted to ignore your key messages because you've said them so many times. Nonetheless, keep repeating them. The more they get said, the more likely that they might actually lodge themselves into a journalist's small mind

The key messages the media working group came up with in 2009, based on discussions at National Gatherings) are:

- 1. This year we have seen just how disastrous our economic and political systems are. They are unsustainable, disempowering, and causing catastrophic climate change.**
- 2. At the UN Climate Conference in Copenhagen this December, we cannot afford to let bankers and politicians dictate yet more false solutions, like carbon trading- which does not lower emissions.**
- 3. The only way we can fight climate change is by ordinary people doing extraordinary things together. Come to the Camp in August and help us build another future. Now is the time for action!**

Leave your notes behind. If what you want to say isn't in your head, you shouldn't be doing the interview. Key messages are short for a reason – so that anyone can remember them.

2.4 Preparing answers

It's a good idea to compile a list of questions you may be asked by reporters and prepare answers before any big event, action or convergence. Your answers should be fairly brief, finding ways to bridge to your key messages.

Tricky questions you may be asked (with possible answers) include:

- Q. What gives you the right to break the law?
A. It shouldn't be lawful for this company to trash our planet / because politicians won't listen to the people, only to profit.
- Q. Do you have any concerns that when you go and break the law, it will give the police an excuse to go hard on activists?
A. It is the job of the police to defend business as usual and protect corporations who are trashing the planet. We want change and oppose business as usual, therefore the police will always be against us.
- Q. Will there be any violence?
A. Let's take a look at where the violence really is – 300,000 people are already dying each year from the effects of climate change / let's be clear on an important distinction, between direct action on the one hand, lawful or not, and violence on the other. They are not the same thing.
- Q. Does the low turnout at this event reflect a lack of support for your cause.
A. A diverse group of people came to this event, including groups from... / this is not a ticketed event, the main point is...

The main thing is to bridge back to your key messages but avoid appearing evasive.

3. Media training skillshare guide

Putting up tents or building wind turbines requires some know-how. The same goes for dealing with the running dogs of the counter-revolution. However, it's easy to skill-up for dealing with the media by putting on a neighbourhood media training and then make sure to use the newly trained activists!

Media training

Below is a comprehensive guide on dealing with journalists, whether on the phone, in the studio or while your head is stuck between a gutter and a fence. We recommend reading through the notes below before you practice asking each other questions. The best way to train up is to role-play: one person pretends to be the journalist, the other the activist. This helps both of you to not only come up with answers, but also to anticipate the questions.

Bridging

The art of getting your message across is taking any question and giving an answer as close to your key messages as possible. This is known as bridging. Common ways to bridge might be by starting a sentence with "What we really need to focus on here is...." or "Let's look at the wider picture for a moment...."

However, you can be a lot more inventive than this, and can have a lot of fun in media trainings by practicing asking more and more awkward questions, challenging each other to find yet more ingenious ways to bridge into your key messages.

Before the interview

- Call back in ten minutes if you need time to rehearse your answers. Work quickly though – getting a statement out quickly can be as important as what you say.
- Who is the best person to give the interview?
- Ask the reporter what their first question will be, what the interview will focus on, what their hook is, whether you will be up against anyone.
- Work out your three key messages.

During the interview

- Use as little technical language as you can. This includes activist jargon – terms such as 'direct action' may need to be explained properly in simple language with stories and examples to illustrate your point. Don't quote too many statistics and keep your answers short.
- Speak in complete thoughts as the reporter's question may be edited out.
- This may sound obvious but never say anything you do not want to read in print, hear on the radio, or see on television or on the internet. There is no such thing as 'off the record'.
- Be confident. Journalists don't know that much about climate change or activism.
- Contrary to everything an interviewer wants you to believe you are not having a casual chat with them. You have come to make some important points, and you must get them across in such a way that the viewer or listener can't possibly ignore them. Also remember that it's the journalist's job to ask good questions, get answers etc - your job is to convey your key messages.
- However much the issue, or your opponent, winds you up, you mustn't let it show. Generally the calmest person is the one whom the audience sees as the winner. This doesn't mean you can't be passionate and enthusiastic - indeed these are good things - but your passion and enthusiasm must be tightly controlled and mustn't, repeat mustn't, spill over into anger. If necessary, take a deep breath before answering the question. Be polite but firm

with everyone. Don't get pressed into saying things you don't want to say, If you don't know say so this can also be great bridge 'I don't know about that, but I do know that...'

- Avoid appearing evasive when you bridge. If you don't know the answer to a question say so.
- Humour is a matter of personal taste so avoid making jokes during interviews.
- Repeat your key points.
- Concerned about your anonymity? – use a fake name (you may not want the press, the police or fascist groups to be able to find out stuff about you).

TV interviews

- You can use one or two gestures to emphasise a point but don't speak with your hands too much. Similarly, using some voice modulation for emphasis is important but don't overdo it.
- Look at the interviewer, not the camera.
- Avoid flashy jewellery and clothes.
- Try to find soundbites that explain things quickly, eg – “nature doesn't do bailouts”, “we need deeds not words”.

After the interview

Be nice to yourself- everyone will have a shit interview, whether it's because of a screwup or because they were assholes.

You almost definitely won't be able to see the story before it's published or broadcast. If you're worried it is okay to call and ask for a review of the story or with further information.

4. Loving up the Independent Media

The corporate media has many, many problems, and only so many of them can be tackled with by smiling. In response to the gross miscoverage which happens on a daily basis, there have always been attempts to take control of our own stories.

Indymedia

Indymedia was born in Seattle in 1999. It was initially composed of 2 basic elements: a physical media centre, where social justice activists who were protesting against the WTO could come together and share information, and a website, which anybody could publish stories on, and upload video and audio segments to as well as add comments to the stories and videos. It proved an instant success. Within a few days it had attracted over 1 million hits.

Today Indymedia has expanded to become a global network of open publishing news sites with over 150 collectives of varying size in over 70 countries. Open publishing means that all of the users of the site produce the news collectively rather than it being the job of a small group. The members of each collective are responsible for enforcing basic editorial guidelines and choosing which articles to highlight as features.

Indymedia pages are not uncensored - the content is sieved in order to maintain a good quality of writing and to stop fascist or offensive material highjacking the movement. That said, for climate campers there is unlikely to be any censorship whatsoever. This means that Indymedia is an invaluable resource in which to promote actions worldwide, get

your personal account across and – if the article is written well and along the Indymedia guidelines – featured content is read by millions. No shit.

Web 2.0 Media Tools

Web 2.0 tools such as Twitter, YouTube, Flickr and Qik may be huge capitalist enterprises, but they do still allow members to write and post content directly to the web where it can be communicated with the public and media.

While Indymedia may be the foremost method of telling activists about actions, social networking sites have become the fastest and quickest way to reach a lot of people who may have had no idea at all what you were about to do. Using these tools offers major advantages to activist reporting:

- They allow members to get news, images and video offsite and off your camera or phone and straight into the public domain as quickly as possible, before your equipment gets seized and material deleted.
- They help deliver live, raw media content to a wider audience which will include the media who can use your unmediated content as source material.

However, it is important to bear in mind that while getting live content into the public domain can be a good thing in many respects you must take extra caution to ensure you aren't a) incriminating any of your fellow activists or b) providing an often hostile mainstream media with imagery or videos that could provide damaging to Climate Camp's reputation or aims.

Basically, remember that whatever you post online is likely to be public and live forever online. So think before you tweet or upload that photo.

Some key Web 2.0 tools that activists can use to report and broadcast live, unmediated news from the Camp include:

Twitter

Twitter (www.twitter.com) is best described as a microblogging platform that allows users to post short updates, known as Tweets, to their profile page. These are a bit like Facebook status updates but are limited to 140 characters in length. All content published to Twitter is publicly visible (unless you decide to make your profile private) and other Twitter users can sign-up to follow you updates.

You can update Twitter from your personal profile page online, by text message, the mobile internet or specific Twitter apps (if you use an iPhone or Blackberry).

Twitter can be used to publish live media content from the Camp in the following ways:

- Information sharing - You can post links to other websites such as Indymedia or YouTube as an update and this can help share breaking news (e.g. video of an action) or important information (e.g. camp eviction) with your network and the wider world. To save space when posting links in 140 characters use the website <http://bit.ly>. This tool shortens long web addresses (e.g. https://we.riseup.net/cc_media/neighbourhood-media-pack) into shorter ones (e.g. <http://bit.ly/3dqe4>)
- Posting Images – Using free Twitter tools such as Twitpic (www.twitpic.com) you can post photographs direct from your phone to your Twitter feed. Again this is great for publishing visual media content direct to the public domain. But remember that it is likely to be accessible to the mainstream so be careful not to incriminate your fellow Campers.
- Hashtags – Hashtags are simple ways of helping people find information on Twitter. A hashtag is a keyword or phrase with a hash (i.e. #) in front. This allows people (including the media) to track latest updates from many different people who all use the same or similar hashtag. In the case of Climate Camp you should try to use #climatecamp. As more people use these tags it helps the wider public and media track information breaking news in real-time

Live video-streaming tools

Live-video streaming tools are simple to use programmes that turn your mobile phone into a TV camera broadcasting live video direct to the Internet. While this is ideal for reporting on actions or breaking events in real-time, always remember to respect your fellow campers and not incriminate anyone on an action. If in doubt, don't film.

There are two main live video-streaming platforms which are recommended for quick and easy reporting. These are Qik (www.qik.com) and Bambuser (<http://bambuser.com>).

Both of these platforms work by requiring you to register a (free) profile on their website. This profile then becomes your own 'TV channel' where your video content is streamed.

After you have registered with the site you will then need to download a programme to your mobile phone. When you open this programme it uses your phone's video camera to live-stream footage to your profile.

You should be aware that the live-streaming platforms above only work with certain phones. Both Qik and Bambuser offer an easy guide to which phones work and which don't so be sure to check yours works before trying to set it up.

Also, live-streaming will eat through your mobile phone's battery life very, very quickly. If you are planning to use live-streaming to report on the Camp then make sure you have spare batteries or access to a charging point.

Video Sharing

Unlike live video-streaming, video sharing websites such as YouTube (www.youtube.com) or Vimeo (<http://vimeo.com>) require you to save and upload your videos after the event rather than live-streaming it (although some mobile phones will allow you to edit video and upload it direct to YouTube).

The obvious limitations to method are that gaining access to a computer and an internet connection is not always easy in the middle of an action or police raid. Plus, if you have your phone or camera confiscated it is likely you'll lose your footage.

However, if you can access an upload point and share your videos via YouTube they can gain access to a mass audience very quickly, which is likely to include mainstream media. An important consideration if you do upload content to YouTube or another video-sharing site is to ensure you give your video an obvious, self-explanatory title and use clear keywords (or 'tags') to describe it. These tags should at least include 'climate camp' or 'camp for climate action' to help people (and the media) find your content quickly and easily.

Photo Sharing

Like video-sharing sites, photo-sharing sites such as Flickr (www.flickr.com) and Photobucket (www.photobucket.com) require you to save and upload your images after the event. However, the most popular platform, Flickr, allows you to post your pictures direct to the web from your mobile phone.

You need to set this up with Flickr in advance of using the service so take a look at Flickr before the Camp. As with YouTube make sure your images are appropriately titled and at least contain the tag 'climate camp' or 'camp for climate action'

Facebook

Facebook is a massively popular networking tool and online community. It allows you to upload and share text, video and images from both a computer with internet connection or from your mobile. While this means you can share media content from the Camp or an action you should bear in mind that unlike the tool outlined above, Facebook is a closed network so any content you publish will only be seen by your friends and family, not the media or wider public.

5. Writing

5.1 How to write a press release

Journalists speak only one language, and that's their own. If you're going to reach them you have to speak that language too. This means that your press release should mimic the format and style of a news story. It's a simple and straightforward formula and (sorry to be dictatorial) it MUST be applied. If it isn't, your press release won't work. Period.

Here's how to fill it in, section by section:

Your contact details

No journalist will run a story without them. Essentials are:

The name of your organisation/disorganisation (preferably big, bold and across the top of the page)

One or more contact names

Contact number(s): where contacts are definitely going to be for at least the next two days (mobile phone numbers are useful).

An **embargo** means that you are instructing journalists not to publish or broadcast the information in the press release before a certain time. There are several good reasons for an embargo: Journalists will know they aren't going to be trumped by anyone else getting in before them. It creates a sense of event. Timelines concentrate journalists' minds. You know when to expect publicity, so you can plan subsequent news management around it.

NB: An embargo doesn't mean that journalists won't be stupid enough to phone the police or the company due to be occupied and ask what they think. So don't stick anything on your press release which you don't want to be generally known.

This is the usual format:

EMBARGO: 00.01am, Friday 15th May

00.01 is a good time, as the papers can then keep up with the broadcasters, and it's less confusing than 00.00.

Do not put an embargo if you've got some immediate news which you want on the radio or TV straight away. Generally, you'd embargo a press release giving advance warning of an action (till about 24 hours before the action's due to start), but not a press release which comes out once the action's started.

The headline must be short, pithy and to the point (and if it's for a local media it must include the name of the area). Avoid mystery, elaborate puns or being too clever. The purpose of the headline is to grab the journalists' attention and give them an idea of what the press release is about. If it doesn't do both of these things, they'll read no further and dump it in the bin. It must be NO MORE than eight words long. Use a big, bold font.

Writing headlines isn't easy, and generally takes a good deal of practice. So practise. Look at how they do it in the papers, then try writing headlines for imaginary actions, or real ones which aren't going to happen for a while. Remember: in this as in all writing, a straightforward, plain style is best.

The first paragraph

This isn't easy either but, like the headline, it's essential to get it right. You've got ONE sentence in which to tell the whole story. If the journalist doesn't get the jist of it, she or he won't read on.

There is nothing so complicated that its essential point can't be summarised in a simple sentence. So work out what you're trying to say, then boil it down to its essence. As before, look at the news stories in the papers and see how they do it.

The rest of the text

...must be no more than two or three paragraphs long, each of which should be no longer than one or two straightforward sentences. They should expand on what you say in the first paragraph. Keep it simple and avoid jargon. Assume (and you won't be far wrong) that journalists know nothing. If there is other essential information which you can't fit in, put it in the Notes for Journalists section. (see below).

Above all, make sure that the first and second paragraphs have covered all the five Ws: WHO, WHY, WHAT, WHERE and WHEN.

Hooks

There are all sort of ways to try and make sure your action looks ultra-relevant. Make sure that your media team is keeping on top of all the stories coming out every day on climate change, and perhaps on the economic and political situations to.

Some examples:

- a protest outside a coal fired power station might do better with a line linking it into recent wild cat strikes at power stations
- an anti-agrofuels action could link in with a UN report on third world food shortages.
- flash floods and unpredictable weather could link in with most climate related stories

These may not be the links journalists use if they write up the action, but it might grab their attention that little bit more.

Notes for editors

Preferably they should be on a separate page. Journalists have got very little time, and the sight of a huge block of text which is hard to digest will put them off. They want to look at the first page and know that the essentials of the story are there. If they want more, they can turn over and read on.

Generally, you'd write no more than four or five paragraphs of notes (and certainly no more than a page). They should give more details about the rationale for the action: eg facts and figures about genetically engineered soya, DBFO roads etc. In other words, this is the place for the complex information which might put journalists off if it's on the front page. Number the paragraphs in this section, as it makes it them look easier to digest.

Sending the Press Release

Make a list of:

Media outlets you want to reach
Individual journalists who seem to be interested in/sympathetic to the cause

The more you can reach the better, of course, but, unless you're just aiming at the local press, realistically you want to try to press release at least forty places. If it's a national action and you want national publicity, they must include the following:

All the broadsheet newspapers
BBC newsroom
ITN/Channel 4 newsroom
Newsnight
The Today programme (on Radio 4), plus PM, The World at One, The World Tonight
Radio 5 Live

When sending it out make sure each contact is listed as a "carbon copy" ("cc") – if you put every journalist's email address in the "to" section they probably won't read your press release.

One thing of which you can be absolutely certain is that something will get lost in the newsrooms you're targeting: either your press release, the journalist's concentration or the essence of the story. This means you MUST follow it up with a phone call.

Just a quick one will do. Ask: Did you get it? Will you be covering the action? Do you need any more information? They're likely to be rude, gruff and unhelpful. But don't be put off - they're paid to be like that. Make sure you're ready, if need be, to summarise the story in one or two sentences; the first question the journalist will ask is "what's it all about then?", and her/his attention will wander if you spend more than ten seconds telling them. However rude they are, never fail to be polite and charming: at the very least, you'll put them to shame.

5.2 How to write a piece for the local paper

1. Quick telephone interview

The simplest step is just to look up the number of your local paper, cold call the newsdesk and say that you're going to Climate Camp and would like to talk to collaborate on an article about local residents going to the camp. Ask who the right person to talk to would be and get their phone number or email address. Arrange a short telephone interview, and remember to get some key messages in there. Simple as.

2. Get someone from the paper to come to a meeting.

Journalists really like getting to know the gang. It makes them feel cool. So inviting a journalist or a photographer to a meeting of a few local campers makes sure that there's some intrigue. You can then follow this up with an interview (either in person or over the phone). Next step, see your lovely faces on page 15!

3. The full story

Most journalists already know about the Camp and some are very sympathetic. With some local residents for quotes and photos, it's sometimes possible to get a full feature in!

SAMPLE LOCAL NEWS ARTICLE:

Camden goes Camping!

Environmental protest is all the rage these days. Graham Bernard caught up with three local residents - Sam from Kentish Town, Maureen from Highgate and Isobel from Tuffnell Park - who are going to a "Climate Camp" this summer.

Sam, who works for a charity, says: Well, I've been really concerned about the environment for a while but I only got involved in climate camp last year - it's really exciting! I've realised that there's more to tackling climate change than just recycling or changing your light bulbs. What's great is that there are no leaders at all - we're all part of a great big fun team!

The Camp for Climate Action came to notice in 2007 when over one thousand protesters set up an eco-village at Heathrow airport for a week. But many people are concerned about the treatment of protesters during the G20.

"I went to the G20" Isobel reports "and I was just so shocked. I just can't believe the way they treat protesters. All we were doing was showing Gordon Brown and other world leaders that we need to do something serious about climate change."

But Maureen didn't feel that this was all about big world politics, but about the smaller things in life too: "I got involved through the Camden Action Network. We've been working on a seed-swap and it's growing bigger by the month. It's really nice to meet up with local people, exchange ideas and make new friends."