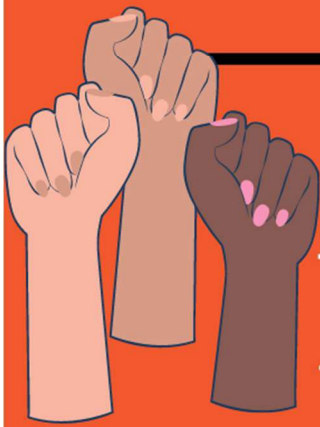


# Episode 22:

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*Taking the*  
**PARTY**



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*out of*  
**POLITICS**

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## **Citizens' Assemblies**

## Hello and Welcome to *Taking the Party out of Politics!*

This is a podcast about understanding how politics is supposed to work, ...  
... why it isn't working as well as it could be working, ...  
... and what we might be able to do about it.

Because:

by understanding a little bit more clearly *how* things are supposed to work,  
and *why* they are a bit messed up,  
we *might* be able to get things to work a *bit better*. Perhaps even a *lot better*.

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This is a little journey we are taking together, about the systems and functioning of Politics:  
systems which we should all understand, because those systems affect all of our lives, all of  
the time.

And this podcast is about how we might be able to make those systems work a bit better.

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In Season 1, we took a look at how government is supposed to work, from the perspective of  
us – the voters.

In Season 2, we took a look at how government is supposed to work, from the perspective of  
someone trying to get elected, and then trying to do a good job.

Looking ahead, in Season 3, we will be looking at what we might be able to do, to make  
things work a bit better. Importantly, when we get to Season 3, we will be sharing our ideas,  
but also sharing some of the best of YOUR ideas, about how to make things work a bit  
better.

Welcome to the second episode of our mini-series, looking at people, organisations, and issues  
which fall outside the established (party) political systems. We are looking at how some of those  
people and organisations are seeking to influence what happens in this country, and in the world  
more generally – in other words, seeking to affect *politics* (but – not necessarily – bothered about  
*party* politics). And, we will be looking at some of the issues which currently aren't being addressed  
successfully by our political party dominated system of politics.

Today, we're going to look at **Citizens' Assemblies**.

Briefly: Bringing regular people together, on behalf of us all, to learn about an issue, to talk about an  
issue, to make decisions about what to do about an issue – perhaps a little bit like the 12 people who  
make up a jury in a court of law: they all come together to make decisions on behalf of us all as to  
whether this person is guilty or not, based on all the evidence which has been presented to them.

We're going to be talking to Marijn and Kathie, again. They are the UK Citizens' Assembly  
representatives for XR (we met them last time), to draw on why XR believes that a Citizens'  
Assembly is a crucial part of getting any serious action taken about addressing the issues behind and  
around Climate Change.

So, we're going to talk about:

1. What is a Citizens' Assembly?
2. How does it work in practice?
3. Do we want more of them?

1. First: What is a Citizens' Assembly?

<https://citizensassembly.co.uk/>

A Citizens' Assembly is a representative group of citizens who are selected at random from the population to learn about, deliberate upon, and make recommendations in relation to a particular issue or set of issues. It is still up to elected politicians whether or not to follow the assembly's recommendations.



The aim is to secure a group of people who are broadly representative of the electorate across characteristics such as their gender, ethnicity, social class and the area where they live.

Now, you might think that this sounds like a focus group. But it isn't.

A 'focus group' is a group of people who are brought together to find out what people already think. Focus groups are sometimes used by politicians (to look at what people think about different ideas or different ways of explaining those ideas), sometimes by companies (to look at what people think about their products or their branding). An example of a focus group might be a group of people who are invited to say what they think about a perfume, or about a breakfast cereal. A focus group might be asked what they think about a political issue, such as Brexit or Scottish devolution, but a focus group isn't brought together for the organisers to make any effort to explain the issue to the participants or to inform their opinions – just to ask what the focus group participants **already** think. The objective of a focus group is to find out what people already think about something.

But that's not what a Citizens' Assembly is. The point of a Citizens' Assembly is to find out what people think about an issue **after** they have learned all about it. And thought about it. And asked questions about it. And discussed it. And thought about it some more. All working together.

OK, let's look a little more deeply into both why Citizens' Assemblies have something unique to offer our political processes, and how exactly they work. We're going to do that today by looking at one of the UK's most prominent groups lobbying for a Citizens' Assembly: Extinction Rebellion. To do that, we're going to be joined by the UK's two XR coordinators for Citizens' Assemblies: Kathie Conn and Marijn van de Geer.

Now, you probably remember from our last episode that Extinction Rebellion wants the government (and, indeed, all institutions) to do something about Climate Change. In fact, they regard the challenge of doing something as so urgent, that they use the term *Climate Emergency*, because, if changing the way we live is going to have an impact on Climate Change, those changes need to happen now.

So – you might well ask – what has all of that got to do with Citizens' Assemblies?

The answer lies in the way that Extinction Rebellion doesn't want to force us into a **particular** solution to Climate Change (other than the fact that XR is very clear that the situation is urgent). What XR wants is for us to think about the issues, learn about the issues, and then for **us** to decide on what action should be taken. And that's where Citizens' Assemblies come in.

So, let's remind ourselves about the three demands from XR:

We're agreed we're in a crisis and that's where we have Demand Number One: Just tell the truth.

Demand Number Two: Act now.

So, there's already that agreement.

There is an emergency. We need to act now.

Demand Number Three: This is how we're going to do it.

So, the solutions would be coming from the Assembly, so people who have ideas about that would present to this citizens assembly. They'd say, well, this is my idea, but then someone in the assembly can say, well yeah, but in my situation in my life that won't work. Or it would work, but we'd have to do it like this and that you can only get that if you're talking to the people rather than a scientist or an expert or a politician sitting in an office somewhere saying, right, we're going to put windfarms everywhere. You know someone from northern Scotland will say, well, you can't put far a wind farm here because it's the last remaining habitat of the last remaining wild cat, you know.

So, if you don't speak to people from the various regions from the various lived experiences, you'll set yourself up to fail. (Marijn)

A Citizens' Assembly brings together a group of people who are asked to "engage in serious, informed reflection on important policy matters with people they may never normally meet."

It's not about what people already think. It's about what they think after they have learned about an issue, asked questions about an issue, and discussed the issue (that's the 'serious, informed reflection').

## 2. How does it work in practice?

Well, there are different parts to this.

**First**, there's how you select the people who are going to be in the Citizens' Assembly.

So, what happens is that people are randomly selected, like for a jury and we all are very happy with juries to sort of pass sentence and find people guilty or not. People are randomly selected like for a jury, and then they're stratified. They're sorted into different groups to represent gender, where they live in the country, and attitude, perhaps to climate, age.

*[So how many people would be on a typical citizens assembly?]*

On a typical world, I mean really there are varying cut off.

Numbers, but I mean some people say from 50 up upwards. I think we would think that at least 100 because you need that diversity in order to get the collective intelligence in order to get the different range of age, experience.

(Kathie)

Yeah, with a hundred citizens you can get a good sample of society so you make sure that you have the right proportions of society. It's a "mini public", we often call it. (Marijn)

*[So, you've got 100 people who are selected to represent society in terms of ages, ethnic backgrounds, educational backgrounds, genders, all those sorts of things. They're randomly selected, and that's the point you're making about jury service in so far as people don't volunteer for this, they're drawn and that's the parallel jury service. OK? And then what happens? You've got 100 people together. What happens?]*

They come together. They're paid in order to make it accessible, so people feel that they can take part, because otherwise you're likely to get the most interested already who volunteer, and so all expenses are paid. (Kathie)

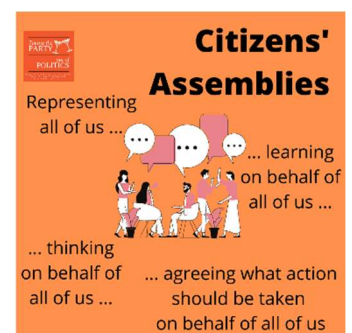
Yeah, so for example, if you work shift work and you're asked to come and be on the (Citizens') Assembly for over the weekend, you would lose out on money obviously, so that's why they make sure you do get paid so that that money isn't a barrier to you participating. (Marijn)

This is important. The people who are in the Citizens' Assembly need to be selected both randomly and carefully. That might sound contradictory, so let's unpick that. The members of the Citizens' Assembly are selected randomly, in the same way as the members of a jury are selected randomly. You can't volunteer to be on a Citizens' Assembly just because you care passionately (one way or another) about an issue. So, it is 'random' in the sense that it is objective, rather than based on passionate volunteering. You can't just apply to be on a particular Citizens' Assembly, just because you really care about that issue. But it is careful selection in the sense that it is important that the members of the Citizens' Assembly represent the population of the country. Some people who vote Tory, some who vote Labour. Some people who went to university, some who didn't. Some younger, some older. And so on, and so on. The idea is that, with a group of about 100 people, you can get people who are pretty much a micro-version of the country, in terms of beliefs, assumptions, backgrounds, and so on.

In order to ensure that people from as wide a range of backgrounds as possible can attend (e.g., those with dependent children or relatives, or just people who wouldn't usually get involved can attend), participants are typically paid for their time.

<https://citizensassembly.co.uk/what-is-a-citizens-assembly/>

That's important. It shouldn't be the case that you can't attend a Citizens' Assembly just because you can't afford to attend.



**Second**, there's how you describe the task – the question which the members of the Citizens' Assembly are asked to reflect on.

This is important. There is usually a key task to consider. Perhaps about whether abortion should be legal. Or whether there should be an independent Scotland.

There is also a clear time frame. It might be that a certain number of days are allocated to the process – perhaps one weekend a month for a certain number of months, for example.

How you phrase the question is important.

Now, you may remember (from our last episode) that the third demand from XR was for a Citizens' Assembly. It is phrased as 'be the change', but what is intended is that there should be a Citizens' Assembly on what we should do about Climate Change. Now, there was a Citizens' Assembly on Climate Change. So, that sounds as though XR should be happy – right?

*[Was that Citizens' Assembly that XR wanted?  
In what way, not what? What did it do and what didn't it do?]*

Kathie: Well, it didn't do very much.

First of all, it was commissioned by six Select Committees and the six select committees are advisory, so there was never any government buy in, so that was its initial limitation.

Also, the question was determined by these six select committees, which was: "How to get to Net Zero by 2050?" Well, you know, obviously they were only presented with information that supported that. There was nothing outside the box. There was no way they could extend their thinking. So, that wasn't very good. There weren't any public submissions. Normally there are submissions from the public where they can feed in some of their ideas, that get collated, and then often the Citizens Assembly will consider it. That didn't happen. But, that said, Marijn is a bit more positive about some of the outcomes.

Marijn: Well, oh and also there was no publicity. No one knew it was going on unless you unless you knew.

Big respect for how it was organized, and they did actually ask us to be in a sort of advisory capacity, which we turned down, because we said we will only do it if the 2050 target can be debated and they said "No, that's not in the mandate of the Assembly", so we said, "Well, we can't support it then because that 2050 is a death sentence, so we can't support that".

But it was a good, robust process, even despite its limitations.

Kathie: They had somebody from Rolls Royce presenting and saying, you know how wonderful it was to be able to take flights to go see your relatives. But we all know that, and we have to move a bit beyond that.

Marijn: It was good that they had that variety, and also what was good (and that was sort of the first time this had been done, I think) is that they selected people on

how they felt about the climate crisis. They based it on a survey that had been done around the country beforehand, so they had the percentages: X% of people in the UK don't care about climate change; X% of people really care about it; and then everything in between. So, they matched those feelings about climate change to the people who were selected to be in the assembly.

So, you did have people in there who were like “Meh! Don't care” and they were the most interesting ones actually. They really went on a journey. Suddenly, they're getting all the climate science explained to them, and they had the opportunity to ask questions to some really pretty amazing climate scientists, and they were like “Oh, ah, right. I had no idea it was this bad!”

And you see them changing.

And equally you see people who come in with very sort of: “We just got to stop or fossil fuels now! We've got to do this and everyone needs to...”

They actually have conversations with someone who needs a car because they're a care worker or they need you know they have certain needs in their lives and you see them going: “OK, right. So we can't be that hard line. We need to figure out how we can make the transition, but we could still support people being able to get from A to B, especially stuff like medical care.”

Kathie: I mean, people modify their thinking by having good information, and by talking to other people.

Marijn: So that was really great from it. Also, the people from Climate Assembly UK that the assembly members said: “Why are we even talking about 2050?” so they themselves were like: “Clearly it needs to be much sooner”, even though it wasn't up for discussion.

They also said we need to look at social justice. You know we can't have the poor bearing the brunt and the elite making money out of this.

They were worried about global South. How is it going to impact them?

So, the way in which the question is put to the Citizens' Assembly – if you like, the target and the parameters of the discussion – well, that's really important. It affects what comes out of the process.

Let's think of an example which might help us to understand this. If I ask you which film you want to watch on TV tonight – the one on Film 4 or the one on BBC1 – then that might sound as though I am giving you the control to choose what we do. But, actually, I'm really not. First of all, I'm restricting the choice to either a film or a film. Second, I'm restricting the choice to watching TV or, well, watching TV. Perhaps you wanted to go out, or to play chess, or just to read your own book somewhere. So, the way in which the question is asked can really affect the possible outcomes.

There are lots of examples of questions which can lead you down blind alleyways, or in directions which are not helpful. For XR, the UK Climate Assembly was misled because it was asked to work out what action should be taken to have an effect by 2050, when most of the science says that action needs to be taken by 2025 for it to have enough effect to stop the changes being caused to our climate.

But, then it's also important that the government is fully engaged with the process – not just letting it take place at arm's length. That's a bit like your parents saying that you are welcome to say what you like about what you would like to watch on TV tonight, but that you have to say it in the garden shed, while they are sitting in the lounge. You are not likely to be able to influence what your family watches on TV unless you are able to say it to everyone's face, are you?

Marijn: So, there were some really good things that came out of it. But obviously, because it wasn't commissioned by the government (it wasn't even commissioned by Parliament, but by Select Committees of Parliament, so even lower down the pecking order), nothing happened with it. I'm worried that these reports are (just) nice doorstops in someone's dusty office.

That's Marijn again.

Marijn: We have some minimum standards that we expect if we want the third demand met and one of them is upfront, clear commitment. If the recommendations are this, what will the government do? If the recommendations are that upfront agreement, publicly announced: What they will do. Also, a real minimum standard would be there needs to be huge publicity. So, every single person in the UK is aware (that) there's a group of people – amongst them people like me that I can identify with – who are going to make decisions that are going to affect all of us, and we are going to be watching this like a hawk. And if the government then backs out and says “Oh, actually, no, we're going to continue flying, and in fact we're actually going to reduce taxes on flights,” (on) things like that the entire country will be aware of this deceit. And that is what's been lacking.



**Third**, there's how you manage the process. That normally involves three phases:

- a. Learning
- b. Consultation
- c. Deliberation and discussion

So, the process starts with the members of the Citizens' Assembly learning about the process. Even before learning about the issue, there is normally a stage of training about how to be a good member of a Citizens' Assembly. That doesn't mean telling you what to think. But it does mean telling you how to discuss issues constructively with others, about disagreeing politely, disagreeing about an issue but not calling (or even thinking that) the other person 'stupid', for example.

Marijn: Usually they rent out a hotel so that there's a big space where they can have the assembly, so people can stay there over the weekend.

There's a big conference room. *[Like for wedding receptions]*

They'll have lots of roundtables where people can sit in groups.

They'll obviously have a welcome. "Thank you so much for being here," and a bit of an introduction about what's going to happen.

And then, as Kathy said, there'll be training on bias.

So literally what bias means is you will already have your opinions about certain things before you even step into the room, whether that's you know the worst form of bias obviously is something like racism or sexism. You will bring that with you whether you know it or not, so it's [important to be able to] identify that within yourself. But also, you're going to have people presenting to you about climate science, for example, so that you are trained to recognize their bias.

What are they bringing? Which company are they from?

If they're from a fossil fuel company, they're going to try and convince you that fossil fuels are great for the planet. That's a really obvious example, but there will be things like that.

There'll be introductions and stuff like that, and you know, kind of try and get everybody to know each other.

There's facilitation, so there's always people there, to help get the conversation going, but that's where it starts.

Then there is learning about the subject, or consultation. Perhaps presentations from experts. Perhaps from pressure groups. Perhaps from members of the public. Probably with questions from the members of the Citizens' Assembly to the experts and pressure groups and members of the public – because it's important to tease out all of the issues, and to make sure that everyone understands everything fully, rather than just jumping to conclusions.

Kathie: And then the learning takes place where there are all sorts of presentations, wide ranging, different. You'd also hear from economists, from historians, because we think it's really important for people to understand how we got to this place.

So, they listen to a wide range of evidence really, and they can ask [questions]. A good citizens assembly should be able to invite people to present that they've heard

about. The expectation is that not just mainstream points of view are presented; that there's some radical thinking, some alternative thinking. They are all learning together, and they are all learning the same [things]. They all have the same information.

Then they breakdown break into small groups of about 8 to 12 people, sitting around a table, not across at each other. They're not trying to win. They're trying to weigh up the pros and the cons and the trade-offs. They talk together, and they deliberate, which is really active listening: it's being able to empathize with other people. You're in front of, people who have a very different life experience to you, that you might have no notion about. You might never have spent time with somebody who's unemployed. You might have no idea what life is like for them. It's that exchange and it's the collective intelligence of these people. It's not down to how clever or anything any one individual is. It's that dynamic of diversity. Everybody is an expert in their own life. Everybody has got something to give and to bring. It's that which gives you a much better informed and wide ranging [process], and much more radical recommendations.

And finally, there is deliberation and discussion. The members of the Citizens' Assembly discuss together what they have heard, and try to work out what they agree is right. This process also normally involves coming out with some recommendations – although what sort of recommendations will depend on the way in which the question has been set up. Remember that XR wasn't happy with the question about what to do about Climate Change was phrased in terms of what to do to get to 'net zero' by 2050, because XR (along with many, many international experts and scientists, it has to be said) believes that action needs to be taken by 2025. And XR wasn't happy that the Climate Change Citizens' Assembly wasn't set up by the government, but had been set up by some parliamentary committees, with the result that the government simply ignored the recommendations which were made by the Citizens' Assembly.

This process is often publicised, so that although the Citizens' Assembly members are the ones going through the process, the general public is kept up to speed with what is happening. This is important. Not only is this a process of educating the public at the same time, this is also a way of not just being transparent (so that the general public knows that what has been happening is all above board, and can follow all of the steps, if they want to) but also of building trust (so that the general public feels that the Citizens' Assembly genuinely does represent them, and that the issues are all being considered fully, so that the general public feels a general level of support and trust in the outcomes of the Citizens' Assembly – even if they weren't following all the details of all of the steps).

Finally, there's what you do with the results of the deliberation and discussion.

This is normally part of the way in which you describe the task. For example, the way in which you phrase a question gives an indication of what you expect from the process. But it also involves what the government (because we are usually talking about the government, or at least some sort of administrative body) is going to do with the results.



The expectation is normally that the government is either going to have to follow the recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly, or is going to have to have a pretty good reason why not – and will have to explain that reason, publicly.

Marijn: What we really want is that this citizens Assembly gets taken on board by the government.

[What do you mean by 'taken on board'?]

So, for example, you can have a citizens assembly and some amazing recommendations come out of.

It, but the government is like: “Yeah, that's great, but we're not going to do that. You know, they're like, “Oh, that sounds too much hard work” or “My best friend in the oil companies isn't going to like it”. You know things like that.

So, they ignore it. And that's what's been happening a lot with Citizens' Assemblies. The assemblies themselves have been pretty good, but then the recommendations actually just get ignored.

So, what we really hope with our third demand – this Citizens' Assembly for climate and ecological justice – is that there is so much pressure on the government to take on the recommendations from this Citizens Assembly, and that we then prove that actually this is a good thing because we're helping the government make better decisions, more informed, fairer, more just, more equal.

If they take it on and we prove it's a success, then they can be like:

“Oh well, actually, let's do a citizen assembly about healthcare or education.”

So we're really hoping by creating this pressure – and because we're with Extinction Rebellion, that's what we do: we create the pressure – that if we can get that one in, and make it good and taken on board, that that will then lead the way for other similar processes to happen. That's the dream.



### **Explanation in a nutshell**

So, let's recap all of that.

That's:

- randomly select citizens, but in a way which represents wider society;
- hear from experts and stakeholders;
- hear from the public;
- facilitated deliberation in groups;
- draft recommendations and vote on them;
- government implements the recommendations – or has a very good reason not to do so.

One of the other terms which is used to talk about what Citizens' Assemblies do is 'Deliberative Democracy'

There are many different models of 'deliberative democracy', but one thing they all share is putting people at the centre of decision making. Every form of deliberative

democracy involves everyday citizens like you and me discussing an issue in order to come up with suggestions or solutions together.

The point about calling it 'Deliberative Democracy' is to distinguish it from what a pressure group might lobby for (for example, the NRA in the USA lobbies to ensure that what gun laws there are, are as loose and as unrestrictive as possible – this isn't necessarily what the average American citizen wants, but it is the result of the pressure applied by the lobby group), or from what a political party might ideologically think is the right thing (more regulation, or less regulation, of a particular thing, based not on what the average citizen might want, but based on what the political ideology of that particular political party thinks is right). 'Deliberative Democracy', then, is not driven by any ideology. It's not driven by a particular group. It is about a group – remember, a group which represents us as a society, rich and poor, young and old – coming together, learning, thinking, discussing, and trying to work out what should be done. As objectively as possible, trying to work out what the 'right' answer is, and what is the 'correct' action is which the government should take.

And that's what a Citizens' Assembly is trying to achieve.

Now, you might ask:

## ***WHY NOT LEAVE IT UP TO THE POLITICIANS?***

From XR Website:

*Citizens' Assemblies are good at dealing with big, wide-ranging and complex problems. We urgently need solutions that everyone can get behind and politicians need our help!*

Now, if you have followed all of the thinking behind *Taking the Party out of Politics*, you might well, be ahead of me here, but let's follow this through anyway.

Extinction Rebellion believes that:

*part of the problem is the way electoral politics works:*

- *Political power in the UK is in the hands of a few elected politicians. Over the last 40 years, this system has proved incapable of making the long-term decisions needed to deal with the climate and ecological emergency. Politicians simply can't see past the next election.*
- *Members of parliament are lobbied by powerful corporations, seek sympathetic media coverage, and calculate their policies based on potential public reactions and opinion polls. This leaves many of them either unable or unwilling to make the bold changes necessary to address the emergency.*

And, Extinction Rebellion believes that:

*A Citizens' Assembly can break the deadlock:*

Because

*A Citizens' Assembly on Climate and Ecological Justice would empower citizens to take the lead so that politicians would be less fearful of political backlash.*

*Experts might propose different policies for how to get to net-zero along with the pros and cons of each. The [Citizens'] assembly would decide which they think is the best option.*

But, a Citizens' Assembly is not just for Christmas. It has wider applications than just for Climate Change.

Marijn: What we would love to see is for this Citizens' Assembly that we're demanding to be a huge success, and then for Citizens' Assemblies to just be rolled out for all sorts of topics. You know it can be used for anything, not just climate and ecological emergency.

Another final important point about Citizens' Assemblies is that it's about people working together to find the right solutions to a challenge. It's not a fight. It's not about trying to prove who is right and who is wrong. It's not a confrontation. But a lot of our Party Politics is exactly that: Confrontational. I only win if you lose.

Marijn: This oppositional thing in the House of Parliament. You'll have seen it on TV. You've got these benches facing each other. The government sits on one side, and the opposition sits on the other side, and it is literally about opposition; whereas what we need is to work together.

I mean it's basic. We're all in this together. We are all f\*\*d, as we say in in XR. There's no time for these petty arguments. They [the government] come up with a plan, therefore, the opposition are automatically going to hate it; and vice versa. We need to all pull together and do this.

Deliberative democracy, i.e. a Citizens Assembly, in this case, is a great tool to bring people together. There will be compromise. You have to you have to get consensus.

So, Citizens' Assemblies.

100 people (or thereabouts) who are selected to broadly represent the population of the country. They come together, they learn about how to work together as effectively as possible, and they learn all about a particular issue. They learn about people who want such-and-such, and they learn about the people who absolutely don't want such-and-such. There are specialists who are helping to ensure that the process is as collaborative and as positive and as fair as possible, to ensure that as many of the participants as possible take part, and that as many as possible end up agreeing with whatever answer the whole group comes up with. It's participatory. It's collaborative.

And, if it is set up right, it could take the whole country with it, sharing the ideas and the information with everyone. And then the government not only has to do something about the recommendations (or have a very good explanation about why it isn't doing it) – the recommendations actually give the government a really good explanation as to why they are doing it.

Because, even if governments, focusing on their 5-year cycle of getting re-elected, often don't have the courage to take on the slightly difficult, longer-term challenges (see our episode on the Wicked Issues), the recommendations from a Citizens' Assembly would give the government a really simple, water-tight explanation as to why they are taking it on. The people really got together (or, at least, a representative group of the people, in the Citizens' Assembly), they learned about it, they thought about it, they talked about it, and this is what they wanted. So, this is really what the whole country would want, if the whole country was given the opportunity to be part of the Citizens' Assembly.

So, let's do it.

In fact, if the UK government wasn't paying attention to the UK Climate Assembly, perhaps they missed a real opportunity.

Next time ...

Next time, we're going to look at another instance where there is a clash between what our politicians might be focused on and what the country actually needs. We're going to look at Public Health. Health issues, and adjusting what happens in the country and in society to improve Public Health – well, as you might imagine, that all happens on the sort of timescales of years, decades, generations. We don't sort out the health of everyone in the country over a weekend. But, our electoral cycle for politicians – whether at the local, regional, or national level – means that a lot of the focus for our politicians is on making sure that the electorate is happy with what they have done over a 4 or a 5-year period. We're going to be in conversation with the Deputy Director for Public Health for Lincolnshire, to discuss what Public Health is all about, and how the relationship between Public Health timescales and electoral timescales works out in practice.

The interests of the country, and the pressures of electoral timescales.

That's what we are going to look at next time.

For now, thank you for listening.

Thank you, again, to Kathie Conn and Marijn van de Geer  
*Internal and External Coordinators for* Citizens' Assembly Working Group for  
Extinction Rebellion UK



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That would be great. Thank you.