



Share



Tweet



Forward

Campaign Strategy Newsletter 107

April 2019 - Campaigns for the Past and for the Future

In this issue:

- How climate-sceptic British right-wing politicians succeeded in killing England's onshore wind energy
- Greta Thunberg and the Youth Strikes
- Where now for XR?

Someone passed you this Newsletter? [Please join my mailing list here](#)

Receive [my blogs by RSS feed](#) or [by email](#) (sorry, different list from Newsletter)

Contact: Chris Rose chris@campaignstrategy.co.uk

Follow me on twitter [@campaignstrat](#)

Campaigns For The Past and for the Future

Two campaigns feature in this Newsletter, both related to climate change. For the future: [Extinction Rebellion/ the Climate Strikes](#). For the past, an anti-climate campaign run by a network of right-wing UK politicians which started around 2010 and led to the abandonment of onshore wind by the last three British governments (the 2010-15 Conservative-LibDem coalition, the 2015-16 Cameron government and the subsequent Theresa May government). It also triggered the retreat from 'detoxifying' and greening the Conservative Party, the experiment started by Cameron in 2005 (see Newsletter 106).

These campaigns are at either ends of a values divide. The same polarity separates the two camps of Brexit. To make real progress on climate change will require politics which can bridge that divide. Modernisation and shared

benefits may be the best hope but it will need cross values appeal, and the pragmatism of Prospector parents may be key to it - more of that another time (for more on values read my book 'Tick' - see below - or explore [this summary](#) and these [links and resources](#)).

Minimum alcohol pricing: I hate it!

Posted on [December 30, 2011](#)



Sharing a pint with Chris Heaton-Harris

From Roger Helmer's blog: Helmer (left) and Heaton-Harris

If any of the mostly young people involved in Britain's wave of climate protests want to know who is responsible for why the inadequacy of the UK's response to climate change, the activities of these politicians are some of those most to blame. Many of them have been involved with the ERG or 'European Research Group' of Eurosceptic Conservatives also known as the 'Brexit Ultras', and with UKIP. Most of them are also 'climate sceptics', and two of the key players, Chris Heaton-Harris MP and former MEP Roger Helmer, both credit Bjorn Lomborg for their convictions. Heaton-Harris has also described Donald Trump as one of his 'biggest supporters'. Until a few weeks ago Heaton-Harris was the Minister responsible for preparing for a no-deal Brexit at DEXU, the Department for Exiting the European Union.



Screenshot of Chris Heaton-Harris's anti-wind campaign group (archived)

Killing The Wind



2012 book by Chris Heaton-Harris MP.

I have posted my attempt at a case-study of the anti-wind energy campaign in a recent blog [Killing the Wind of England](#), along with a [Full Wind Politics Timeline](#)

from 1988 to 2019 (beware – over 100 pages), as well as a [Condensed Timeline](#), [slides](#), and notes on the [Political Actors](#) involved. I started researching it because I was asked why British onshore wind in particular had become highly politicised along the same values divide as Brexit (see [Brexit Values Story Part 1](#), [Part 2.1](#) and [2.2](#)), more even than other forms of renewable energy such as solar pv.

Two Values Dynamics

In short, whereas both the Conservative and Labour parties have historically been ‘broad church’ parties with support across all three main values groups of Settlers, Prospectors and Pioneers (although [now being fractured](#) by [values](#) tensions exposed by Brexit), the Eurosceptic and Climatesceptic anti-wind campaigners played on values-competition for mainly older Settler voters between the Conservatives and UKIP to pull the party to the right. UKIP already campaigned against onshore wind and the Conservatives, who had promoted it, made a political virtue out of rejecting it (a tactic which, in the end, failed in its political objective as Cameron had to resign over Brexit and Nigel Farage’s UKIP has re-emerged as the ‘Brexit Party’, currently polling well among right-wing voters).

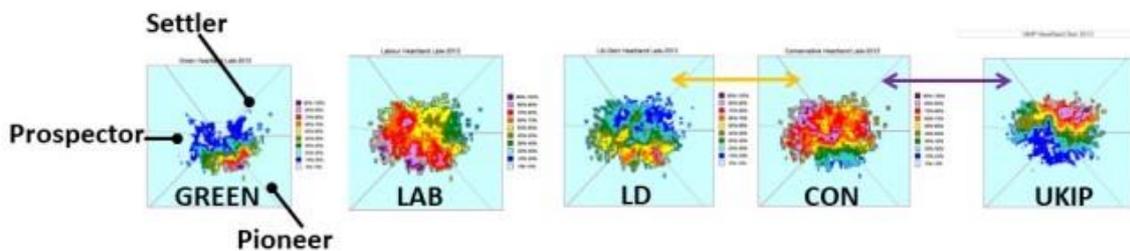


Conservative Peter Bone MP (left) with Nigel Farage of UKIP and (right) Tom Pursglove at the launch of ‘Grassroots Out’ ‘GO MOVEMENT’ a short lived Brexit group in 2016. Farage described wind energy as ‘loopy’ and vastly

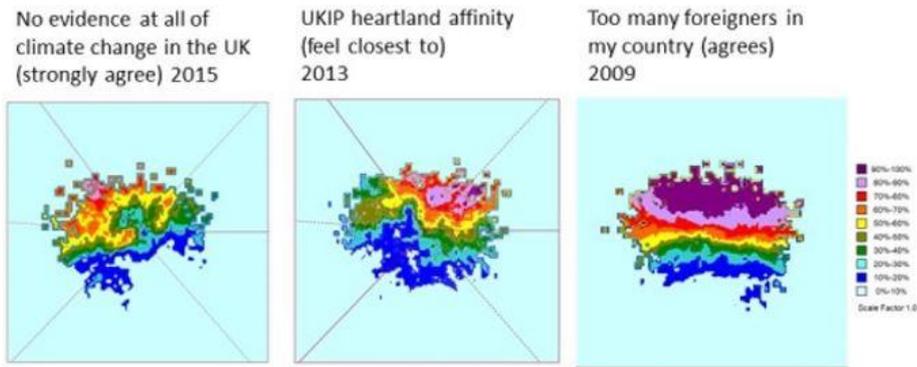
exaggerated its cost. Pursglove was Heaton-Harris's assistant before becoming a Conservative MP and took over as director of Together Against Wind. (photo from [Northampton Chronicle](#))

In a ruthlessly well organised campaign, Heaton-Harris et al set about exploiting the unexpected gift of the Conservative-Liberal democrat coalition which was inherently unstable because there was an almost complete *lack* of values overlap amongst their two political 'heartlands' (see below and [blog](#)).

From 2012 Cameron and his Chancellor and chief strategist George Osborne used the progressive demonization of onshore wind to put 'clear blue water' between themselves and the environmentally minded LibDems, whose support base was overwhelmingly Pioneer. The campaigners, nearly all elected politicians supported by right-wing climatesceptic bloggers, worked from inside and outside government to cut funding, sideline sustainability policies, change local planning so as to make it possible for small numbers of anti-wind activists to have wind farms rejected, and ultimately from 2016, to deny Britain's most cost-effective renewable energy (onshore wind and large solar pv) access to the market. Consequently England's 'pipeline' of onshore wind projects has more or less completely dried up and the country now struggles to meet its own objectives to tackle climate change.



Parties and values: the Conservative and UKIP values base overlapped completely and they competed for the Settler vote; Conservative and LibDems were almost mirror images of one another with no overlap and their alliance was inherently unstable. This combination played a crucial role in facilitating the anti-wind campaign by right-wing Conservatives.



Above: [CDSM data](#) showing the close alignment of climate denial, affinity to UKIP and anti-immigration sentiment in the UK 2009-15

UKIP's agenda was based on three pillars with the same values profile: anti-EU (looks similar to above), anti-renewables especially wind, and anti-immigration (especially in the EU Referendum campaign in 2016). Politicians such as David Cameron saw these as a bizarre mix of unrelated topics but they fitted perfectly in values terms.



Adam Bettcher / Getty Images

RUSSIAN DOLLS

Russians used coal to sow discord among Americans, says Mueller report

And finally ... Grist magazine and other US sources [have reported](#) that a close reading of the unredacted bits of the Mueller report show that the Russian 'Internet Research Agency' exploited values divides over coal in its social media campaigning. 'Interesting' given Russian interest in Brexit, Farage and Heaton-Harris's links to Trump, and contacts between many of the anti-wind campaigners and Eurosceptics such as Heaton-Harris, Bone and Helmer with ALEC in the US.

Campaigning Take-Outs

You can read more about it at the [blog](#) but here is my take on possible learnings for campaigns.

1. As was the case with Brexit, values surveys (in this case going back to 2005) showed the potential for the UKIP-Conservative and the Conservative-LibDem dynamics to occur, and to align for and against renewable energy because as many values surveys [had showed](#), climate-scepticism was highly values-polarised on the same lines. So it was to an extent predictable, and if NGOs want to be aware of such problems, they need to inform themselves about values and avoid values projection in favour of [building values support](#) through values diversity.

2. The NGOs won the air war over climate but in this case, lost the ground war. General public support for onshore wind remained very high and the governments own tracker studies show it did not shift before, during or after the policy reversal. But the wind industry lobby and green NGOs failed to effectively organise on the ground to counter the anti-wind campaign led by Heaton-Harris, which convinced many MPs (and not only Tories) that large numbers of voters and most 'communities' were against wind farms. General public pro-wind opinion was merely expressive whereas what counted was the instrumental effect of a small number of highly engaged activists representing a few percent of the public.

3. While green NGOs are in the greater scheme of things, actually rather small and cannot be everywhere and do everything, on climate and energy in the UK they may have assumed that having achieved a huge success with the 2008 Climate Change Act and the statutory carbon-budgets system it set up, government machinery would inevitably implement the necessary policies to decarbonize Britain's energy system. In practice that system left enough

wiggle-room for the government to ban onshore wind when it seemed politically expedient to do so, and climate NGOs remained mainly focused on topline international carbon politics.

4. The anti-wind campaign is a real-world case of an anti-reflexive campaign (anti-modernization, anti-science, anti-change) or a 'cultural backlash' with many of the features [described in the recent books and papers by Ron Inglehart](#) of the World Values Survey. Many 'progressive' causes could be susceptible to such effects. Read Inglehart !

5. Although in values terms, UK society as a whole is still shifting towards 'Pioneer values' or as Inglehart calls it 'post material' values, this only expresses itself *proportionately* if the means of expression are individual and not *organised*. When an organising factor intervenes as a focus, directional vector, coordinator or concentrator, values-driven change no longer seeps steadily through society like groundwater sinking into the soil but the effects flow rapidly in channels isolated from the mass of the system, as with the hidden development of 'piping' of underground streams in soils.

So Pioneer values can find expression out of proportion to the size or rate of change of the Pioneer segment through 'progressive' campaigns but in this case the reverse happened and Settler values were focused and magnified to the point where conventional wisdom had it that "people" opposed wind farms on the ground.

Britain ended up with a UKIP-style energy policy (banning onshore wind, supporting fracking for fossil gas) because the organising effects of loud local activism, which in turn drove the convictions and fears of individual MPs, and through the networking of ERG members and others. Together these had a disproportionate influence, and finally, those in the government held power and chose to act on protests they had colluded in causing. So a general shift towards 'progressive' values is no guarantee that progressive 'politics' will follow all by itself.

6. The anti-wind campaign enjoyed considerable advantages because it was a campaign by politicians whose party was in power, against its own government, and with the collusion of members of the government but it had one potential weakness which was not exploited by the pro-wind side. As noted in #2, it relied on the framing notion (often adopted by the media) that 'communities' and most of all 'rural communities' opposed wind farms. This default assumption was largely achieved with a smoke-and-mirrors magnification of the anti-wind sentiment in 'communities'. The NGOs and the wind industry were split within themselves in different ways, they were still operating on top-down lines that had worked while 'sustainable development' held some sway in UK government, and they failed to manifest support in emotionally engaging ways. One way could have been by mobilising renewable industry workers, businesses and their families to engage with MPs and local media. Another now might be if the school strikers were to demand wind power, as for now at least, they are much more compelling messengers than the established NGOs.

Hopefully Britain's shelving of its abundant onshore wind resource is a temporary hiatus which will not last and as the blog explores, there are some signs of a rethink but so far it has probably been the greatest climate sceptic success in the UK. It was a fight between the future and the past which the past won.

XR and the Climate 'School Strikes'

For years my friend [Tom Burke wondered aloud](#) when the young would rise up and demand action on climate change and now of course they have. [Greta Thunberg](#) undoubtedly terrifies the climate sceptics and no doubt the fossil fuel industry.

On April 24 the climate' denying British blogger James Delingpole, who was 'hired' by Heaton-Harris to play a bit-part in the anti-wind campaign, [ranted](#)

about Thunberg in Breitbart news like this:

'A brainwashed child in pig-tails pushing a hard-left, anti-capitalist agenda which will drive up energy prices, hamper industry with taxes and regulations, destroy jobs, cause the poor and elderly to die in fuel poverty, enrich crony capitalists, and spread lies and fear and fake news about a non-existent problem'.

It doesn't get much better than that. If I were organising the oil industry's response strategy to Thunberg, a one way extradition for Delingpole to somewhere with no access to the internet would be the first item on my expenses list (lots of *Daily Telegraph* suggestions [here](#) folks). Was he trying to be biblical? Only the plagues were lacking. Or is he just jealous? If only he had a bigger audience. Sadly I expect there will be a more insidious and better judged campaign to try and contain her influence.

Inspiration

I hesitate to say anything much about Greta Thunberg as I only know what I've read about her in the media and because I hope her best is yet to come.

For a long time I've been convinced that the environmental movement suffers a deficit of truly popular heroes and I once tried unsuccessfully to persuade a film-making friend to make a 'Hollywood' movie about the life of John Muir but maybe that person has now arrived in real-time. She is certainly already an inspiration to millions, and by personifying the case she will continue to transform 'climate communications' more than all the tweaks and adjustments that can be accumulated by use of better 'messaging' techniques.

XR

I don't know about the rest of the world but thanks to an invitation to Parliament

by Britain's only Green MP Carolyn Lucas at the same time as XR's long planned week of protests in London, the 'school strikes' and Extinction Rebellion have rather merged in the popular consciousness. Together they have certainly 'raised awareness' and 'put climate on the agenda' in the UK:

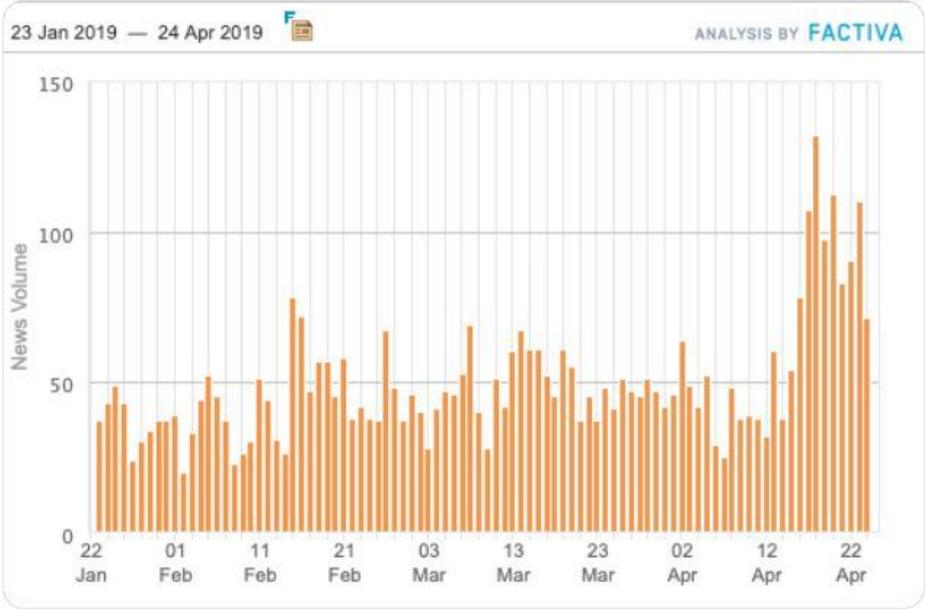
You Retweeted

 **Leo Hickman** @LeoHickman · Apr 24

Wow!

This is the combined impact that the #ExtinctionRebellion protests, David Attenborough film and @GretaThunberg's visit has had on the UK media over recent days.

(Mentions of "climate change" in UK media over the past 3 months, according to Factiva)



23 Jan 2019 — 24 Apr 2019 ANALYSIS BY FACTIVA

News Volume

150

100

50

0

22 Jan 01 Feb 11 Feb 21 Feb 03 Mar 13 Mar 23 Mar 02 Apr 12 Apr 22 Apr

23 636 1.7K

Show this thread

From my twitter feed @campaignstrat 25 April 2019

XR's latest episode of blocking bridges in London coincided with a pause in the Parliamentary Brexit tragi-comedy and it dominated British news media for days. For a while it looked as if they were teetering on the edge of losing public

sympathy, particularly on the day when the media and social media were full of stories about commuters who were unable to get to work by bus or tube and so had resorted to Ubers.

Plus, as is usually the case with loosely organised 'movement' protests, there was sometimes a failure to explain. I heard a few truly dire media interviews with XR 'observers' or other representatives whose agenda seemed to be to bash the (very gentle) policing that the events attracted, or to emphasise how pleased they were with their own tactical cleverness, rather than to talk about why they were doing it. But there were also lots of good interviews and the protestors just about managed to stay inside the rule of [being the most empathetic figures in the story](#).

Support from a National Treasure

XR got a major public boost when in the middle of the protests the BBC aired a well-trailed TV programme fronted by national treasure David Attenborough on climate science ([Climate Change: the Facts](#)). This pulled no punches when it came to laying down the reality of the impact and what needs to be done in terms of eliminating pollution. It didn't deal with who was and is to blame in terms of politics and corporates but within the constraints of the format it was hard to fault. If you can access it and are interested in climate change, try to watch it.

At any event, by accident or design it put Attenborough on the side of the climate change XR actions and thereby made it impossible for the BBC to either ignore or downplay what XR were doing, as inside the BBC Attenborough has god-like status. The perfect storm of alignment was completed when Thunberg arrived, addressed Parliament, and XR sensibly wound up their activities for the time being. I couldn't have planned it better myself – if indeed it was planned – and in fact I didn't have anything to do with it.

Where Now

XR now face strategic and tactical dilemmas which Thunberg and the school strikes probably do not, although in terms of public motivation, the latter are more significant.

XR are potentially vulnerable because without more organisation they may lack focus and the ability to move onto influencing the implementation steps which are necessary to turn their aims into achievable objectives. Their tactics of large scale disruption could also easily start to look ineffective and thus the costs unjustifiable, if they do not achieve contagion or any concrete outcomes in terms of changing government or corporate policy. My guess is that diversification of tactics and achieving a contagion and escalation of support rather than relying solely on disruption might produce the biggest results. But I could be wrong.

With more organisation they would inevitably become more tractable, for example identifiable leaders – the “guiding hand” – can be served with Court Orders. And while getting arrested has been [celebrated](#) almost as if it is an end in itself by some in XR, may feel harmless, even fun, being sent to jail very rarely does. That sort of logic appeals to those most committed but can signal to others that these are people with very different priorities and facing different realities from themselves. Previous UK direct action movements based around sustained obstruction such as the 1990s roads protests were broken by the government criminalising tactics (in that case trespass) and by a failure (which XR may not suffer from) to have a brand that sympathisers could actively support.

Being more organised and having to avoid splits, to agree on demands which seem to a big enough chunk of the public to make sense and be reasonable, and to conduct ‘negotiations’ with the government, which at least some of the XR leaders seem to intend, also carry their own risks. But right now they have succeeded and at least temporarily promoted the climate crisis in the ‘public agenda’ in a way that conventional NGOs could not, or were not. XR could

now evolve in many directions. Demonstrating a widening and deepening of support for the 'climate emergency' (such as from Councils and businesses as XR already is doing) is one obvious good idea.

The children's /youth climate strikes are a different kettle of fish. No parent or grandparent can respond to them in the same way as they can to other adults. In my view that reason alone is enough to give them huge potential. I for one am thankful that both these campaigns are happening.



If you are interested in reading more about motivational values you can order a single copy of *What Makes People Tick: The Three Hidden Worlds of Settlers, Prospectors and Pioneers* preferably direct from me [here](#), or find it on Amazon in which case they get lots of the money. Discount for bulk orders - [contact me](#).

Find my book [How to Win Campaigns: Communications for Change](#) at booksellers

The Campaign Strategy Newsletter

© Chris Rose. You are free to reproduce all or any part of this Newsletter if you credit the source.

Find the blog at

<http://www.campaignstrategy.org/threeworlds/>

<http://www.campaignstrategy.org> is a non-profit website on campaign techniques & strategies, designed to help NGOs, funded by Campaign Strategy Ltd.