



Frequently Asked Questions

For FAQs related to protesting, your rights and the law, please see our [guides](#).

Where does the name Green and Black Cross come from?

'Green' reflects the fact that much of the experience, skills and infrastructure in our movement has come from the ecological direct action movement. The rest of the name is a nod to the [Anarchist Black Cross](#), a movement of mutual-aid projects providing practical assistance to anarchists facing repression.

When and how did you start?

At the time of the student protests in the winter of 2010, a number of people who had been involved with the [Camp for Climate Action](#) saw a need for similar support for student and other anti-cuts activists. GBC draws on a lot of the resources and skills from the Camp for Climate Action Legal Team, as well as those of other past and current groups such as the [Legal Defense and Monitoring Group](#), [UK Action Medics](#) and the [Activists Legal Project](#).

How do we know you aren't cops?

You don't. We have ways of building up trust between members of the group, and try very hard to ensure the security of the data we hold, but we can never guarantee this completely: like all groups involved in protest we are potentially vulnerable to police infiltration. Please don't tell us details of your actions if they are super secret, and please don't share stories or evidence that could potentially incriminate you!

Are you solicitors?

No. We have a separate role to solicitors which is to enable practical support for protest and legal issues connected to protest. We do this because we are a part of the movement, not because it is our job! Our advice is based on our significant collective experience of protest and interactions with the law, but is not official legal advice.

Why contact you rather than just a solicitor?

Collectively, with all of us together working in solidarity, we are stronger and more effective. If you go it alone then not only do you miss out on our assistance, experience and support, but you potentially also deny your own support to others in the same boat. We often have a lot of valuable witness information for defendants from both Legal Observers and members of the public.

Are you connected to or funded by a law firm?

We have no connection to any law firm or solicitors. We are entirely independent. The [solicitors we recommend](#) are ones many activists have used and found to be good and experienced in protest related cases, and we update our recommendations in response to feedback from activists.

Are there other groups doing similar work?

Our Training & Resources collectives work closely alongside other independent and autonomous legal support groups: the [Independent Legal Observer Network \(ILON\)](#), the Phone Helpline, [Activist Court Aid Brigade \(ACAB\)](#) and the [Network for Police Monitoring \(Netpol\)](#). You can read more on our [Partner Groups page](#). We don't intend to replicate or duplicate infrastructure or support projects already active in any given area, but hopefully advance collaboration within the movement, with GBC acting as one possible portal.

Are you paid to do this?

Everyone involved in GBC is acting in a voluntary capacity because they believe in the importance of this kind of support on protests. As we grew as an organisation, we found it increasingly difficult to cope with all our admin work so for several years we had 1-3 part time paid staff members to support this, but we currently have no paid staff. We try where possible to cover childcare & travel expenses of volunteers.

Where do you get money?



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We accept [donations](#) from individuals to help cover printing, phone bills etc. We also apply for grant funding for larger costs.

Can we donate money towards costs?

Yes, that would be amazing! [See here for how to donate.](#)

Where are you based?

There is no permanent Green and Black Cross 'office'. Our biggest groups are in London and Manchester, but we have a number of [other groups across the UK](#), and are always interested to hear from people interested in training or setting up new groups in places we don't yet cover.

What do you do with the data of people who contact you?

We are aware that some of the data we hold are very sensitive, particularly around arrests. We minimise what we collect and store, minimise the number of people who have access to this, and have a high standard for the security of platforms on which we hold data. We will always check for permission if to share information with others, e.g. your solicitor. We also comply with GDPR legislation – see our [privacy notice](#).

Do you have anything to do with chocolate?

No not, *that* chocolate! We're big fans of biscuits at our meetings though [come along!](#)

Please do contact us and get involved!