



# 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 the contemporary autonomous/activist scene in the UK 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 Defence 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?

A number of other groups train and send out legal observers, and we work closely with many of these, particularly the [Legal Defence and Monitoring Group](#). We are a member of the [Network for Police Monitoring](#), which brings together groups which monitor public order, protest and community policing. 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?

All legal observers and action medics are 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 we now have one part-time paid staff member to specifically help with these tasks. We continue to organise non-hierarchically.

## 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, including getting specific grant funding to cover the salary of our paid part-time staff member.

### **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.

### **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!**