

Where to from here?

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One of [the thoughtful comments](#) received here after the Cambridge Hilton event on 28 February essentially embraced this idea:

Could we create somewhere to talk to each other?

That deserves a proper reply.

First, there was a real sense that a community was developing around the Funding the Future work in discussion at Cambridge. But the comment raised a deeper issue: how do we, in that case, create places where that community can actually talk?

I think this matters for a number of reasons.

1 - Ideas need conversations to grow

Political economy is not a spectator sport. If we are going to challenge the myths of neoliberalism:

- * the household budget story,
- * the nonsense about tax funding spending,
- * the idea that social security is a burden rather than a collective insurance scheme,

then people need somewhere to test ideas together.

2 - Events are not enough

A talk in Cambridge, or maybe Leeds next time, is good. But a single lecture does not build a movement. Conversations do.

3 - Many people feel out of their depth

I completely understand the point made about networking over tea and coffee feeling

awkward. Events can be intimidating. That is not what we want. We want a politics of care, not a politics of hierarchy. So the suggestion of a social element, including coffee beforehand, a drink afterwards, or some way to connect between events, is entirely reasonable.

The constraint

This being said, I have to be honest: we cannot run another platform at present. Between the blog, YouTube channel, other channels, podcasts, Substack, downloads, events, the glossary, and the constant research and writing that underpins all of it, there is no significant spare capacity to moderate or manage another online community. Much as I like the idea, and I do, it is not something we can take on, and most definitely alone.

So what might work?

There are several possibilities that do not require us to run them.

1 - Reader-organised local groups

If people in Cambridge, Sheffield and elsewhere want to meet, that is great news. It is exactly how real communities form. I am keen to encourage such groups. Make them relaxed, and that helps everyone. Then share notes on what works, please.

2 - A closed Facebook group

This might be another practical option. It allows discussion, volunteer moderation, and some privacy. It does not require us to build infrastructure or manage membership lists. But it does require active moderators who will sanction those who abuse.

3 - WhatsApp or Signal groups organised locally

Small local groups can also work very well. They are easier to manage and often more supportive. But they also require moderation and enthusiasm.

4 - Use the YouTube community tab or blog comments as signposts

People could post: "Does anyone in Leeds (or wherever) want to meet?" So long as respondents give permission to share email addresses, we can do that. In other words, the community can grow organically. It does not need to be run from the centre.

Why this matters politically

We talk a lot here about the politics of care. Care is relational. It happens between people. And if we are to build an alternative to neoliberalism, and one based on cooperation, social security, public investment, and sustainable well-being, then we

need spaces where people can talk to each other, learn together, and organise together.

Not everything has to be done by one person or one blog. In fact, it cannot be.

So here is the question

What do you think would work?

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Would a closed Facebook group be useful?

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Would local reader-organised meet-ups work?

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Would a simple mailing list linking local organisers help?

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Do you have other ideas?

And, crucially, would anyone be willing to help organise such things?

And when commenting, please make sure to give me permission to share your contact details.

Because the reality is this: we can provide ideas, analysis, and discussion here on Funding the Future and on YouTube. But communities are built by the people who are part of them.

So please let me know your thoughts. We can then go from there - or, as importantly, you can.

I am not offering a poll: this one requires comments.