

Horizon 1 – What are the signs that the current system of Unitarian life within Cambridge is not fit for the future?

Small congregation

- Aging congregation
- Membership of congregation regularly changing
- Dwindling congregation
- Our practices and ways of doing things suit the retired
- Disconnect between mid-week and weekend activity
- Fewer children - competition for weekend activities and no youth leader
- Congregation is geographically spread out

Challenges of managing resources

- Relying on financial reserves, not enough income to sustain us
- We have a crumbling building
- Failure to confront reality

Ethos

- Tension between diversity of views and unifying identity
- Conflict + avoidance
- Unclear on our vision for Cambridge unitarians

Minister or ministry?

- Very dependent on our minister
- Too much asked of minister
- Volunteer (and maybe staff?) Burnout
- Balancing what we can give to our community v our personal lives
- Lots of responsibility on very few people

Horizon 3 – What would we like the new system to look and feel like?

Structure

- Ministry-led not minister-led community
- The 'Purposes and Principles of Cambridge Congregation' supports action
- Well-funded staffing
- All our activities are communicated on our website
- A good comms system to tell people what we are doing

Spiritual needs

- Wider range of creative ways to engage with spirituality
- 'Kiitsu Kyokai' enabling new modes of free liberal religion

Community needs

- A supportive network be for people coming through the door
- Our activities meet the needs of the local community
- Multi-generational congregation
- A wider range of online + offline offerings
- Communal coffees and meals
- A balance of students + longer term locals
- Our buildings are comfortable and relevant for a wide range of groups
- Our building is attractive to strangers + expresses who we are

Positive future

- Congregation is more engaged, running + participating in activities
- New ideas are supported to grow + flourish

Horizon 2 – What innovations do we know of that might be the growth points of that future system?

Infrastructure

- Fix the buildings
- Embracing technologies and innovations e.g. Heating, sound, website
- Employing someone to support trustees
- Spaces for forgiving + gracious conversations for difficult contentious topics

Communication and outreach

- Wider range of communications about what we are doing
- Inter-faith contact and engagement
- Personalised invitations for families with young children
- More paid staff e.g. Fundraiser, community worker

Congregational development

- Events like the 'Games, Recipes and Equality' workshop
- Kiitsu kyōkai and other experiments with worship formats
- "Provisionality" – having permission to give things a try

Community building

- The weekly reminder of belonging to a rich heritage – 'the tradition' – moving train metaphor
- Engagement + covenant groups
- More lay-led worship + events
- Online socials to build relationships
- A group set up to help support new ideas in the right way