

Funding the Future

Article URL

<https://www.taxresearch.org.uk/Blog/2014/07/14/thanks-and-whats-next/>

Published: January 12, 2026, 6:12 pm

I was, I admit, very surprised and a little overwhelmed by the response to my blog entitled '[What does matter?](#)' written and published early on Saturday morning.

If there is one part of blogging that is tedious (indeed, the only part that I find tedious) it is dealing with the comments of the cohort of pretty antagonistic and profoundly right wing commentators who post persistently, and frequently repetitively, in what seems to be a deliberate attempt, on many occasions, to waste my time.

Now agreeing with me is very definitely not a condition for posting here. In fact, I appreciate and benefit from constructive disagreement: all debate does. But it is the repetitive and aggressive nature of the opposition that characterises much if the commentary that is annoying.

I am aware that some so may own style encourages this. I do not accept that. Whilst I have over the years undoubtedly been robust (and still can be) this was pretty much a pre-condition of getting tax justice onto the agenda both in the UK and elsewhere. As most will attest when they meet me, this is not my personal style. In the face of antagonism I do not, however, accept nonsense, but the evidence of where the aggression comes from can very easily be found both in the body and comments section of things like Tim Worstall's blog, which I note he has said is no longer catalogued by Google because of its offensive nature.

So, what have I learned? First, that there are people who seem to appreciate this blog. Thank you. I really appreciate that.

Second, there are occasions when favourable commentators can massively outpost the negative ones. It's been notable that the right wing commentators here are complaining that I must have rigged the comments to achieve this outcome. That is simply not true; the vast majority of comments made to this blog (even the one requesting that I die, on this occasion) get posted.

Third, some comments were also made by email. I won't name the person who sent this - who I do not know - but I appreciated it:

Your blog is an essential reference point for me I find it concise informative and illuminating and read it as soon as it is delivered. The concern you display for your fellow human beings should be recognised and commended.

Your articulate and intelligent observations are no doubt unpalatable to a minority of individuals who recognise that you hit the nail on the head time after time.

Please keep doing what you do as you do it exceptionally well.

That point about the minority is the most important in this - although I am human, and did appreciate the rest. There are around 5,000 reads of this blog a day during the week with fewer at the weekend (although that tends to be because I blog much less at weekends and about half of all traffic seems to relate to the day's posts and half to the back catalogue). I suspect now that the vast majority of readers are sympathetic to what I write. However, the comments don't usually reflect that fact - although I greatly appreciate the few regular sympathetic commentators who do contribute and add a lot to this blog.

And in that case I think that there are lessons to learn from this.

The first is that - as many have told me - that engaging with the time wasters is pretty much that - a waste of time.

But more important, the issue is of engagement. I have often been asked when speaking what people can do to support tax justice. The answer is you don't have to write a blog or become much of an expert. But engagement helps. Support here is appreciated, but it's a bit like a letter in the Guardian; useful as an indication of support but unlikely (if I am honest) to reach many but the converted. So the need is to engage more widely and that is possible.

Papers want letters. Please write them. Say you support your local tax office. Say you regret the unfair advantage big business has over local companies. Object to any privatisation contracts. Support the local NHS. Say you don't mind paying taxes for the services you get (which is such a shocking idea you're bound to get published). If you get good service from a public authority, say so. These things do help in all sorts of ways, including with the morale of those you thank.

Also try doing the same on local radio stations - and national ones - that have phone in programmes. The BBC, in particular, has to try to get balance on these issues and sometimes struggle to achieve it. Take part. Just write down three key points at most you want to make before calling e.g.

1. I support today's strikers

2. That's because I really value (e.g. the care and support the local authority's staff have provided to my mother in law)

3. I think it unfair that the people doing the work have seen their wages fall heavily and can't make ends meet.

Or:

1. I think large companies should be expected to pay higher rates of tax than smaller ones

2. The government has almost levelled these rates up

3. I think that's unfair because big companies can always borrow money more cheaply than small ones so the small ones need a lower rate of tax to compensate for that.

Such lines are needed, urgently, because the neoliberals keep saying that competition always works, but we know it doesn't so we need the fight back material.

And if you can't do the above - well, please do comment here. And support organisations like 38 Degrees and Avaaz. Clicktivism works.

Finally, join a union. If more people did [we would have greater equality in this country](#). And that is one of the goals of tax justice.