

'How to Govern: Creating the Courageous State' is on it...

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I first suggested that I had an idea for a new book on this blog [on 3 September](#). At the time, the book outline was only a day or so old.

Yesterday, just six weeks later, I signed a contract with Wiley, a major publisher, to bring that book into being.

I am delighted to confirm that Wiley will publish the book as part of its trade programme. In other words, it will be available in bookshops and on all the usual online distribution platforms.

Publication is planned by Easter 2027, so the timetable is tight. I have agreed to deliver the completed manuscript by the end of this month. Fortunately, I have now written ten of the twelve planned chapters in first draft, and some have already been copyread. I still have work to do, though, before I am satisfied with it.

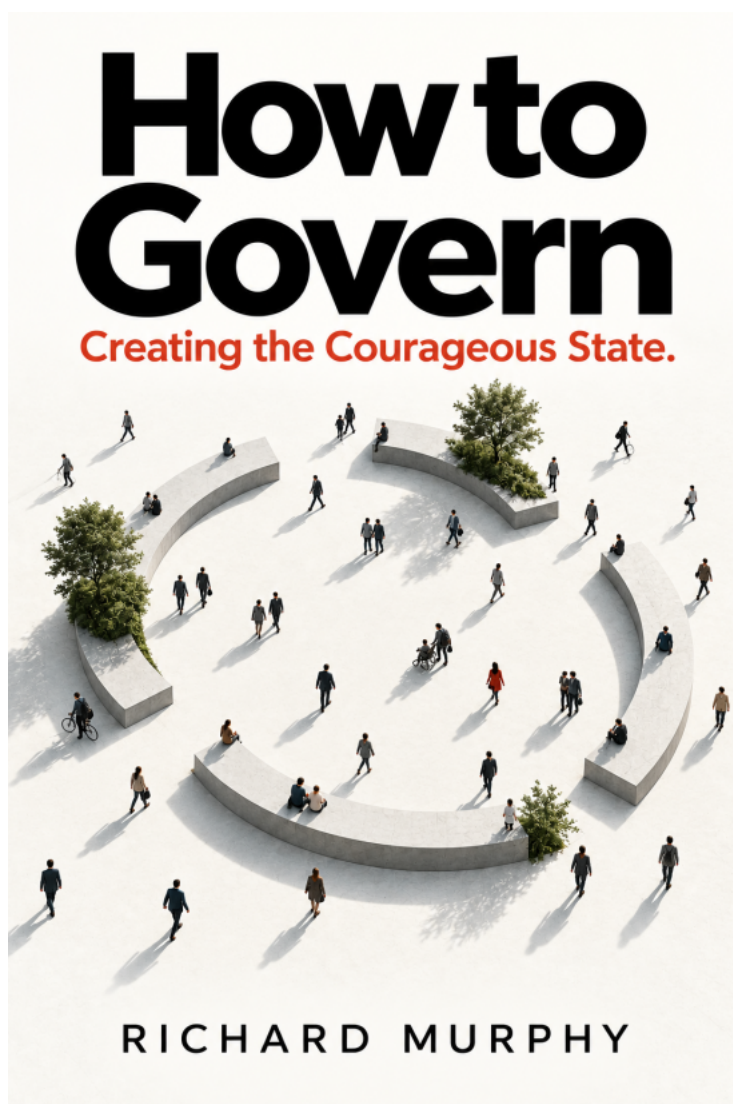
The book will be deliberately short, at a little over 30,000 words. That is not because there is little to say. Quite the opposite is true. The book is short because I want to make the arguments as clear, direct, and accessible as possible, without unnecessary complication or repetition.

There is another reason for keeping the book short. I want it to be affordable. The plan is to price it so it is accessible to as many people as possible. I do not want the cost of the book to be a barrier to people reading it. I hope the price will be around £12 (but I stress that this is only a current estimate), and it might be lower in some places.

The book will also include more than 20 new infographics. These are being specially prepared to accompany the text, and they will play an important role in how the book explains its arguments. Anyone who has followed the development of the infographics on this blog over recent months will know how important I think it is to make economic ideas understandable this way. It seems Wiley were impressed. I think they will make a real difference to the book's accessibility.

The working title remains *How to Govern: Creating the Courageous State*, as I

suggested in September. The draft cover I shared then remains a starting point for discussion, though the final design will, of course, be agreed with the publisher.



This was my draft back cover blurb when I submitted the proposal:

Why do governments seem increasingly incapable of governing?

Public services are failing. Housing is increasingly unaffordable. Infrastructure is deteriorating. Inequality persists. Climate change demands action. Yet politicians repeatedly tell us that the solutions we need cannot be afforded.

In *How to Govern*, Richard Murphy argues that the problem runs deeper than political incompetence. For more than forty years, governments have been taught an economic philosophy that tells them not to govern: to trust markets, retreat from responsibility and treat the public finances as though they were those of a household.

This book offers a radically different way of thinking.

Government does not face the financial constraints conventionally claimed for it. Its real limits are people, skills, resources, productive capacity and the environment. The crucial question is therefore not "Can we afford it?" but "**Can we resource it?**"

From money, taxation and government debt to inflation, markets, public services and the role of the state, *How to Govern* explains the tools governments actually possess, the constraints they really face, and how those tools can be used to achieve democratically chosen goals.

The Courageous State does not promise everything. It does something more important: it accepts responsibility for making change possible.

Richard Murphy is a political economist, former chartered accountant

The book's purpose has not changed since September. I want to explain how government could be done better in the UK and elsewhere if those responsible for it properly understood how money, taxation, government spending, debt and the wider economy actually work.

I have long argued that much of what passes for economic debate in this country and elsewhere rests on misunderstandings about these issues. Those misunderstandings have consequences. They constrain political choices, justify unnecessary austerity, prevent essential investment and leave politicians claiming that they cannot do things that are entirely possible.

This book challenges those assumptions and behaviours and explains what could be done instead.

That is why I am deliberately writing this book in a non-technical style. I want people interested in politics and economics but who have never studied either subject formally to read it. I also want politicians, their advisers, journalists, and others who influence public debate to read it.

In particular, I hope it will reach people who are beginning to appreciate that the economic thinking that has dominated politics in much of the so-called Western world for decades has failed, but who are not yet sure what might replace it. The book is intended to help them answer that question.

I also hope the combination of a relatively low price, a short, accessible text, and new infographics will make the book attractive to people who might not normally buy a book about economics. That matters to me because I want these ideas to reach well beyond this blog's and my YouTube channel's existing readership.

There is still considerable work to do before publication. I must complete the manuscript, finalise the infographics, add a glossary, and then help edit and prepare the whole book for printing. However, with the contract now signed, that process is formally under way.

As soon as Wiley is ready to accept advance orders, I will share the details here. I hope that will be possible soon.

I admit to being quite excited about this project. Seeing a book you have written in print is always rewarding, but this book is about much more than that.

Quite deliberately, it brings together ideas that I have been developing and discussing on this blog for many years. It puts them in one place, in a form that I hope will make sense to people who have never previously encountered them.

Above all, I want this book to make a difference.

We need better government in this country and around the neoliberal world.

We need better macroeconomic management.

And we need a politics of care.

I hope that this book will help bring about those three things.