

Ed Balls starts to roll...but there's so much more coul...

Published: January 14, 2026, 7:44 am

As the [Observer notes today](#):

Labour will attempt to lead a cross-party rebellion to enforce a new £2bn tax on bankers to fund a back-to-work scheme for jobless young people, the shadow chancellor, Ed Balls, said on Sunday.

Balls is calling on rebel Tory and Lib Dem MPs to back the plan — an extension of a Labour tax on bankers' bonuses — in a vote in the Commons later this month. It would provide £1.2bn for a house-building scheme to provide low-cost homes and create 20,000 new jobs, £600m in payments to employers to take 90,000 more under-25s and £200m for unemployment "blackspots" around the country.

This is welcome: it's a really good start.

But just imagine what [£20 billion raised from tackling tax evasion and tax avoidance](#) could do each year? I believe that much is possible. And yes, I do believe that the state could spend it much more productively than those who have it now.

And then just imagine what [£20 billion of investment in new wealth creation in the UK](#) a year, paid for by requiring one quarter of all money invested in UK pension funds to go into new job creating opportunities could also do?

We could have an economy firing on all cylinders.

That's not a pipe dream: that's a choice open to us.

It's [what people writing in the Observer called for today](#).

Labour really needs to deliver it.