

A ship of fools with the deluded at the helm

Published: January 13, 2026, 1:47 am

I don't always agree with Will Hutton. [On this he was spot on, today:](#)

According to the IFS, 88% of the planned spending cuts lie ahead over the next four years — a scale of continual spending reduction never contemplated nor delivered in our history. Public provision of everything is to be emasculated, with welfare in the front line. We now also learn that public sector pay in the regions, a last prop for many local economies, is also in the frame. Despite all this, and despite a darkening international economic situation as oil prices rise, the Office for Budget Responsibility blithely forecasts that business investment is to climb by 40%, the largest increase since the war. It is a ship of fools with the deluded at the helm.

A ship of fools with the deluded at the helm is exactly what we have.

The trouble is the ship's crew is made up of Tories, most Lib Dems, Purple Labour and maybe more.

That's the really scary bit.