

No way to run a tax system

Published: January 13, 2026, 3:03 am

As the [Mirror \(and others\)](#) report this morning:

HM Revenue & Customs is to close all 170 of its offices across the country in favour of 13 new regional tax centres.

The major restructuring aims to slash hundreds of millions of pounds from its budget.

Thousands of HMRC's 56,000 staff could be made redundant in the long term.

The cuts are expected to be so severe that there will be no tax office in south-west England west of Bristol, with little or no coverage in East Anglia.

I have, of course, written extensively on this issue. It is simply impossible to collect tax without people without appropriate local knowledge in the UK. To think otherwise is insanity. And to take HMRC out of the communities it is meant to serve is to deny the fundamental role tax plays in all our lives.

At every level this is the wrong policy for the UK's tax authority and can only increase the tax gap.

But then, that increasingly seems to be the aim of a government whose only goal is to shrink the state, come what may.