

# Labour should establish an independent office for ta...

Published: January 13, 2026, 12:54 am

---

I am quoted by Larry Elliott [in the Guardian](#) this afternoon on the tax gap:

*The accountant and tax expert Richard Murphy says: “Reeves could raise billions by closing the tax gap, but not by looking offshore to find it. The tax gap is in the cities, towns and villages of the UK where small businesses aren’t paying large amounts of what they owe.*

*“If she wants to collect that money – and support honest business by doing so – then she needs to reopen the UK’s local tax offices and put VAT inspectors back on the road, checking that business really pay. Nothing else can work.”*

*Murphy believes HMRC is under-estimating the size of the tax gap, which he says could be as high as £90bn. He thinks [Labour](#) should establish an independent office for tax responsibility to monitor delivery and ensure HMRC doesn’t “mark its own homework”.*

The overall opinion that Larry finds from the interviews he did? That Reeves is being an optimist, although the reasons vary. But no one seems to doubt that more investment in HM Revenue & Customs is necessary.