

Comment

The Installer

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Was there a £22 billion black hole in the public finances?

Did Chancellor Rachel Reeves break Labour's manifesto pledge not to raise taxes on working people by conveniently redefining who the Party considers to be working people?

My answer to question one is – probably given that no government has managed to come up with a 'fully-costed' budget that actually works since the end of the Second World War by my reckoning. And I have no confidence in this latest budget being any better.

Reeves should know that taxation has implications and taxation is fluid – you plan to raise so much money from business growth for example, only to find businesses recede because of your measures...and you are left with the shortfall.

Gordon Brown (a previous Labour Chancellor for those too young to remember) raised and spent loads of money on hospitals, schools and infrastructure to boost the economy. Trouble was that much of the money went to overseas suppliers – so contractors did well but the country did badly. And then a global financial meltdown happened and we were all left in the mire.

What will happen this time – hold your breath and hope for a boom for the next two years but don't be surprised if interest rates continue to fall...before climbing steeply again in 2027 or 2028.

Aluminium Systems

Referring back to Mr Brown who forgot to buy British, I think there is positivity that more money will stay in the UK both from what is spent by the government and from what is spent by individuals. I think global trade has changed and there has been a swing away from buying cheaply from overseas. I fully concur with Roger Hartshorn of Garnalex Sheerline that we need honesty in reporting true U-Values of the products this industry sells – and we need to buy British wherever possible – see Pages 16-17. Now raw materials aren't particularly produced here but we have some great employers of large numbers of people housed on these shores producing profiles and selling them on to the firms that make windows.

Check your supply chain – and make sure your money goes to British companies as far as is possible (and buy Vauxhall vans made in Luton).

Purpose, Plan Execute

With more money available next year, you need an all-encompassing strategic marketing plan for 2025. Our marketing article on Page 27 will give you some ideas. Meanwhile, why not start planning your trip now to the FIT Show at the end of April – See News Pages 5-6.

Smoking Rising

Can you believe that smoking is on the rise for manual trades? Surely, an industry that is so focussed on wellbeing shouldn't be turning a blind eye to the most unhealthy practice. So, as we approach the new year, let's all think about what's going on in our employees' heads – and think about what's going on their lungs.

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