

Help the self employed

The UK needs more self employed people. It needs more self employed people who can go on to employ others and to set up small businesses. More self employment brings more choice, more innovation., more local service . Out of a swelling host of self employed more larger businesses will emerge when someone's idea and dedication to service takes off.

The covid lockdowns damaged a lot of small businesses and hit many self employed hard. An older generation of self employed took a look at early retirement and some went for it, frustrated by the bans on their activities and the limitations placed on their customers by covid rules. Meanwhile changes to the rules of IR 35 in 2017 and 2021 made it more difficult for some to set up as self employed or to maintain that status even though they were genuinely on their own and searching for a range of customers and clients.

The government as it ponders how to encourage more people back into work at a time of more jobs than applicants should regard promotion of self employment as part of the answer. It should revisit tax rules to make sure they do not penalise those who are independent and not enjoying employee benefits from a single "client" whilst in practise just working for one company. Some setting up in business may well start with just one client or customer, but are open for others and trying to win others. They do not enjoy employee rights with their first customer, but are desperate to diversity their customer base.