

For those in doubt Guernsey is a secrecy jurisdiction

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It's been drawn to my attention that [yesterday's Guernsey Press](#) included the following article:

CHRISTIAN Aid has apologised for pointing the finger at Guernsey during a campaign to expose countries accused of helping individuals and companies to dodge tax.

The charity launched its Big Tax Return campaign in 2008 to highlight the role of tax in developing countries.

It aimed to expose the way in which unscrupulous businesses looted the wealth of poor countries, but avoided paying taxes due to the country — and the Channel Islands were dragged into the debate.

‘Unfortunately when this campaign was launched the Channel Islands were caught in the middle, especially when the Tax Justice Network protesters reached Jersey,’ said Sarah Bough (pictured), secretary of the Guernsey branch of the charity.

The hint to the reality of what is going on is in the picture accompanying the article — which is of the local Christian Aid branch secretary. It appears that it is they say who are offering the apology.

Well, I can be emphatic. They are wrong to do so. First of all, my work has shown Guernsey to be one of the most widely recognised tax havens in the world. This is shown in my [literature review](#) on this issue which reviewed tax haven lists over a period of more than thirty years — to find Guernsey on them all. Admittedly it scraped off the OECD 2009 listing but given that a commitment to sign just twelve Tax Information Exchange Agreements was the sole commitment needed to get off the list — and Guernsey met this absurdly low standard days before the list was published — that was hardly an objective test.

Second, the evidence published on the [secrecy jurisdictions web site](#) published by the Tax Justice Network shows this to be the case. Guernsey got an opacity ranking of 79 out of 100, which placed it at 49th on the global list of tax havens.

When however this data was ranked by financial flows for the joint Tax Justice Network and Christian Aid [Financial Secrecy Index](#) then Guernsey was ranked 13th out of 60 secrecy jurisdictions.

In that case whatever the local branch of Christian Aid says, and however local journalists might like to spin things, Christian Aid reports and the Tax Justice Network confirms they still very firmly think Guernsey is a tax haven and secrecy jurisdiction. By all objective measures Guernsey remains as unacceptable as ever. Please don't doubt it.