

Will Jersey spoil Cameron's party?

Published: January 14, 2026, 2:40 am

As the [Guardian notes this morning](#):

David Cameron has asked the senior ministers of all Britain's overseas territories — including Bermuda, Jersey and the British Virgin Islands — to London on the eve of this month's G8 summit to urge them to root out the multibillion-pound evasion industry by signing up to agreements to share tax information.

I genuinely think Cameron had no idea what he was getting into when he began his campaign on tax abuse in the immediate aftermath of Starbucks. I am quite sure he had no appreciation of the fact that the problem was in his backyard - and even at home, where the UK runs a hopelessly inefficient company register that provides no information at all on beneficial ownership.

Now he's realised action is needed. Jersey will, I guarantee, say no until the last moment - screaming and protesting that it has met all current standards. But all that proves is that current standards are, as I've long argued, woefully inadequate and that as a result serious reform is needed.

The OECD convention that these UK dependencies are being asked to sign up to (and which we could oblige them to comply with since we have responsibility for their foreign affairs, and this is an international issue) is not much of a step that represents real progress. The OECD's efforts to tackle international tax abuse have been a woeful failure. If they weren't we wouldn't be where we are now. But the gesture has to be made.

I think Cameron will get what he wants. But I wouldn't like to guarantee it. Jersey might just spoil his party still.