

Ben Delo (BitMEX)

Ben Delo — Reform UK Donor (BitMEX Founder)

“ Twitter/X discussion source: Research conducted May 2026 via Nitter

Full name: Ben Delo **Approx total donated (to Reform UK):** £4 million **Source of wealth:** Mathematician, programmer and co-founder of BitMEX (cryptocurrency derivatives exchange). Educated at Oxford University, worked at IBM and JP Morgan. **Why they donate:** Backs Reform UK's anti-establishment, pro-crypto agenda. The party's pledge to cut capital gains tax on crypto from 24% to 10% and create a Strategic Bitcoin Reserve directly benefits the crypto sector Delo helped pioneer. **Controversies:** In 2022, Delo pleaded guilty to violating the US Bank Secrecy Act by wilfully failing to implement adequate anti-money laundering procedures at BitMEX. He was sentenced but in March 2025, Donald Trump pardoned him. His £4m donation to Reform has drawn scrutiny given his criminal conviction and the party's pro-crypto stance. The timing of donations relative to policy positions has raised conflict-of-interest questions similar to the Harborne-Farage dynamic.

Twitter/X Discussion

Delo generates significant Twitter discussion. Key themes:

- **"Convicted criminal" framing:** Twitter accounts regularly note "Reform UK has received £4 million from a convicted criminal, Ben Delo" — this is one of the most common attack lines
- **Trump pardon:** The Trump pardon (§ March 2025) is widely cited, with critics arguing it shows Reform is linked to "international criminal networks"
- **Moving back to UK to bypass donation caps:** Several tweets discuss The Observer's reporting that Delo moved back to the UK from Hong Kong specifically to bypass Labour's planned donation cap on overseas donors — he's described as "heading home to UK to fund Reform after 'tinpot' donations cap by Labour"
- **Wider network:** He's linked to funding "Jordon Peterson, Reform, Kemi, Triggernometry" and other right-wing causes

- **Association with George Cottrell:** One tweet notes Delo is "often in the company of convicted fraudster and criminal money-laundering expert 'Posh' George Cottrell" — and that Farage was with both of them in Thailand in 2020

The "Reform is proposing cutting capital gains tax on crypto" — Delo benefit" connection is frequently made in threads about donation influence.

Reddit Discussion

On Reddit, Delo is discussed mainly in the context of Reform's crypto connections. The "Trump-pardoned money launderer bankrolling Reform" narrative is common. Some threads note that Delo living in Hong Kong (and now returning) is connected to investigations by Chinese authorities, linking to broader concerns about foreign influence in UK politics.

Notes

- BitMEX was one of the first major crypto derivatives platforms
- Delo is a British-born Oxford graduate — not a foreign donor
- His Trump pardon has been criticised as another example of the crypto industry buying political influence

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