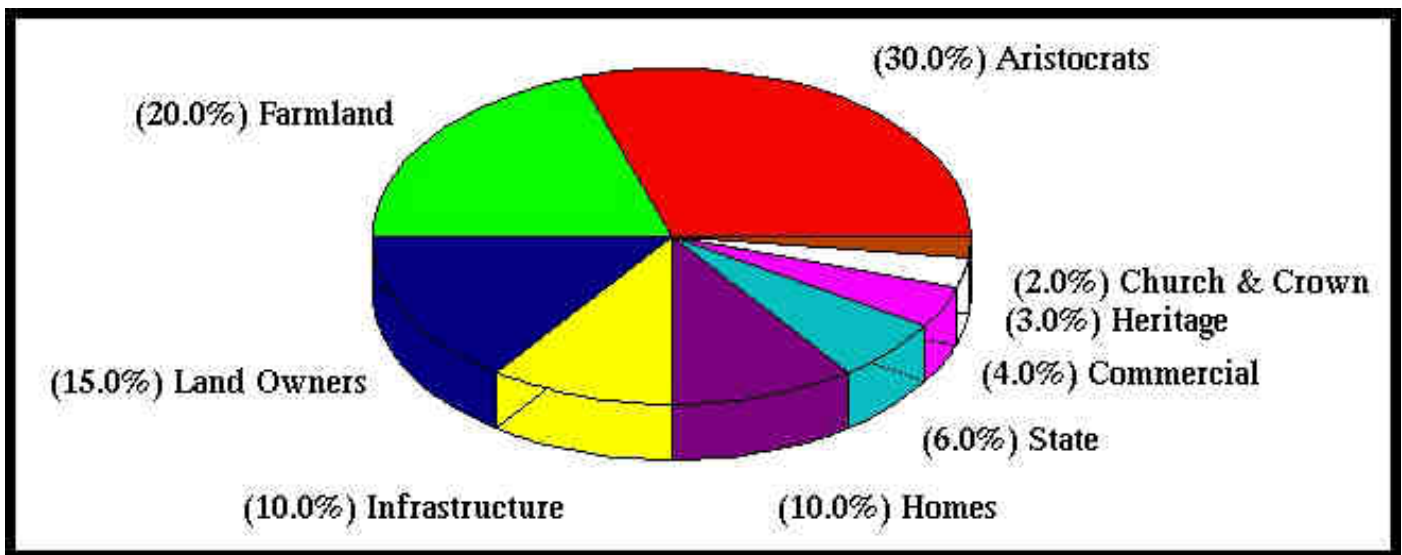


# The pattern of Britain's land ownership.

From 'Whose Britain is it anyway'  
The John Snow documentary.  
BBC2, Tues 10<sup>th</sup> Jan 06

- There are 60 million acres of land in Britain, and 60 million people !
- 70% of UK is owned by 1 % of the population.
- 90% of the people live on less than 10% of the land.
- Modern homes are 1 third smaller than those belonging to our parents.

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**The pattern of Britain's land ownership.** (rounded up - approximate figures)



On a pie chart it would set up like this:

- 10%: Home Owners, Joe publics stake in great Britain inc.
- 15%: Private landowners, everything from golf courses, stud farms and celebrity new rich land.
- 20%: Farmland, a figure made up of some 250.000 small farms.
- 30%: Aristocrats, nearly a third of Britain in the hands of the toffs.
- 1%: Church, its not the land owning power that it was.
- 1%: Crown, all land owned by or on behalf of the royals.
- 3%: Heritage, including the National Trust 800.000 acres and RSPB 300.000 acres.( The fastest growing section)
- 4%: Commercial Institutions, (mainly urban land) owned by pension funds, among others.
- 6%: State, the MoD (600.000 acres) and largest, the Forestry Commission with 2.5 million acres.
- 10%: Infrastructure, Eg: roads, parks , playing fields etc.

In the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century 90% of the people own less than 10% of the land, and a hand full of aristocrats and landed gentry own 30%. This is a hugely unequal distribution.

The vast majority of British people, the homeowners, (100 years ago 1 in 10 people owned their own home, now its 7 in 10 of people) are being crammed closer and closer together as building land gets scarcer and more expensive. Government demands an average of 14 homes per acre, and the average family home is a third of an acre. 90% of the people living on less than 10% of the land.

Ours is a country that has no history of land reform, no revolution to upset the size of estates that go back as far as William the Conqueror. Half of all land in England and Wales is unregistered, this is land passed on through generations of aristos, and no-one officially knows who owns it, the last time most of the land was fully registered was in 1872. In 1872 old aristocratic families owned half of the land in Britain now , it seems they own around a third of the land. Land ownership affords them political and economic power and social status.

Some of the historic land owners like the church and the crown own much less than you might think, the Church who possessed 20% of the land 1000 years ago, has less than 1 % now, selling off land for more than a century to pay its costs.

Governments now regard the huge estates, and popular institutions like the National Trust and the Forestry Commission as the best way to preserve our countryside. That's why many of the big landlords get tax breaks and subsidies if they open their land to the public. We the Taxpayers, are financing this conservation . So if like current political leaders, were not prepared to crusade for change, we may as well enjoy the amenities were paying for and demand even greater access to them.

There is 1.5 million acres of common land, not necessarily owned by the people but able to be walked on and visited. Heritage land including the National Trust 800.000 acres and RSPB 300.000 acres which represents 3% of the land is the fastest growing section.

- What does this mean for Land Roots?
- Who will we buy the land off?
- How will the pie chart look in 10, 20 50 yrs time?
- How do land roots grow their assets to tip the change?

**If, as is suggested in the report, “the future of the countryside is the playground of the city”  
Land Roots role is to make sure that the rules of play are sustainable  
and allow all players to join in the fun!**

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