



Northern Ireland
Assembly

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Privately owned land within national parks

1 Context

This paper has been prepared in response to a request from the Environment Committee, detailing the extent of privately owned land in National Parks in England, Scotland and Wales.

The land within UK National Parks is a mixture of public and private ownership. This paper gives an *approximate* percentage of privately owned land. It does not give a definitive or descriptive analysis of all land ownership within each National Park.

2 Methodology and challenges

The data detailing the percentage of privately owned land across the 15 National Parks in the UK is not centrally held. If data was not already publically available, individual requests were submitted to the National Park Authorities. This is with the exception of Wales where a Policy Officer for National Parks Wales provided the data for Brecon Beacons, Snowdonia and Pembrokeshire Coast.

Due to data not being centrally collated, the methodology for the collection of the data may vary depending on the authority and a number of caveats are evident.

Although there is no standard categorisation for what constitutes ‘private and publically owned’ land, it is assumed that publically owned land may include but is not limited to, land with open public access controlled by public or voluntary sector organisations. Privately owned land is all other ‘non-publically owned land’ and may include large private estates, companies, individual properties and farmland.

It is likely data may include freehold properties as well as leaseholds etc. Therefore the actual ‘ownership’ dataset is difficult to quantify.

Although the most recent data available has been provided, it is possible that data may be outdated and a rolling revision programme to check accuracy may not be in place.

With the caveats in mind, the percentage of land in private ownership for each National Park should be viewed as **indicative and not definitive**. They are **approximations that contain certain limitations**.

3 England and Wales

National Park	Year of Designation	Approximate % of Land in Private Ownership
Brecon Beacons	1957	65
Dartmoor ¹	1951	49.4
Exmoor ²	1954	77.5
Lake District	1951	Not available
Northumberland	1956	57
North York Moors	1952	90
Peak District ³	1951	62
Pembrokeshire Coast	1952	75
Snowdonia	1951	69.9
Yorkshire Dales	1954	95
The Broads	1989	Not available
New Forest	2005	45.2
South Downs	2010	Not available ⁴

¹ Authority records what land is owned by the major public bodies and trusts and data is only updated as and when needed. There is no rolling provision programme in place to check its accuracy. Data is expressed as the total area of land not owned by public bodies and trusts and therefore assumed to be in private ownership.

² Details of public and corporate ownership/leasing is available. It has been assumed that the rest of the land is in private ownership. Available online at: http://www.exploremoor.co.uk/index/learning_about/living_in_communities/land_ownership.htm [Accessed 19 June 2012]

³ Includes individual landowners, Highways Agency, Constituent Authorities, English Nature and others.

⁴ The data is expected to be available after completion of a collation exercise in 2013.

4 Scotland

National Park	Year of Designation	Approximate % of Land in Private Ownership
Loch Lomond -Trossachs	2002	56
Cairngorms	2003	80