

## NATIONAL TRUST RESEARCH

**The Movement for Justice and Reconciliation, founded in 2015, welcomes the announcement of the National Trust of its intention to publish the results of its investigation of the history of the families that owned many of the properties in their present care.**



We warmly welcome their statement: “We believe that only by honestly and openly acknowledging and sharing those stories can we do justice to the true complexity of past, present and future, and the sometimes uncomfortable role that Britain, and Britons, have played in global history since the 16<sup>th</sup> century or even earlier.”

The National Trust say that 29 of the properties now in their care have direct links with colonial slavery and the slave trade, and about one third of all their properties have some kind of connection to colonialism.

MJR has a particular concern for the legacy of slavery, the effects of which can be seen in the social situations of many families living in predominantly migrant areas of British cities today. Our own research demonstrates the link between colonial slavery and present-day issues of health and education faced by members of these migrant communities.

We noted with dismay in October 2015, when British Prime Minister David Cameron visited Jamaica, far from promising support for educational and economic development, he announced Britain’s intention of spending £15 million on building a giant new prison in Jamaica. Even this was not to benefit Jamaica, but to enable Britain to deport those with Jamaican ancestry who are causing overcrowding in British prisons.

We welcome the revelations coming from the National Trust research showing the links between colonial slavery and the wealth enjoyed by the families of the great country houses now being enjoyed by millions of visitors. It is our hope that this will lead to a greater understanding of the legacy of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade that is a major factor in the lives of present-day families with Caribbean origins in Britain today.

It is our hope that the National Trust research will lead to the establishment of a positive programme of dealing with the vast number of buildings, statues and plaques that have links with British colonial history and the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. This research should stimulate a national debate on handling the physical atrophies derived from the events that effected life-changing outcomes for the African people who were forced to make their homes in the Caribbean. We would like to see their heritage honoured by the recognition of the part they played in producing the wealth of Victorian Britain which could lead to a process of Christian reconciliation and mutual respect between Britain and the people of the Caribbean.

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