

Tax has contributed to inequality in the UK

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There has been much discussion of the new ONS report on wealth in the UK issued yesterday. As the [Guardian has noted](#) one key finding was:

The average wealth of households in the southeast had surged to £309,000 at the end of 2012, up 30% since the first wealth report published by the ONS covering 2006-8 — while the average rise in England was only 6%.

The messages inherent in that paragraph are, I think, clear, and at the same time worth noting.

First there is the issue of growing regional inequality which does of course disguise growing personal inequality in wealth in this country. That does not matter just because of the money itself. It matters because of the inequality of opportunity it also represents. That's as simply stated as saying that it prevents anyone from outside the south east ever having a chance of working there. You can't make things more unequal than that.

Second, this is graphic representation of the UK's failure to tax wealth. That failure to tax let this happen.

Third, this very obviously is about the additional failure to keep the finance industry within any reasonable constraints in the UK.

But most of all the disparity shows the failure of what the late and not lamented New Labour called 'joined up thinking'. If that thinking had really been used then tax would have been used to prevent this outcome, but that did not happen.

Now we have a social crisis in the UK. Tax has to be a key component in the solution.

But will any party (barring the Greens) say so?