

407,791 Came to be Counted

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THE MARCH, SEPTEMBER 2002

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There were 407,791 marchers, a further 119,000 'marching in spirit', and 2,250 coaches from throughout the United Kingdom and Ireland. There were special trains from 35 starting points, representatives from at least 30 other countries and more than 1,000 rural organisations. They all invaded London on Sunday 22nd September 2002 under the overall direction of the Countryside Alliance.

From dawn, as the first flecks of autumn dimmed the plane trees in the Royal Parks, they began to congregate. Coaches from as far away as Forres on the Moray coast and the very tip of Cornwall nosed their way into Park Lane or Southwark Street and, with quiet good humour, the passengers joined the gathering crowds in Hyde Park or on the Embankment at Blackfriars. London awoke to never-ending convoys of coaches and ever-flowing streams of people disgorging from the mainline stations at Liverpool Street, King's Cross, Waterloo and Paddington.

Those who were there will never forget the politeness and the extraordinary discipline of that volunteer army. Despite the difference in backgrounds, interests and activities, they were absolutely united on one point: they all saw the proposed hunting legislation as the 'last straw' in their dealings with Government. No better name could have been coined for the march than 'Liberty and Livelihood': both were at stake.



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