

Keyword: The Montcalm

Happy Mondays' Bez hosts world's most relaxed political rally - at Ed Miliband's manifesto venue

By Sarah Walters

The 50-year-old threw the rave for his Reality Party at Manchester's ex-Granada Studios, the same venue where Ed Miliband unveiled his manifesto today

When it comes to political rallies we're used to seeing placards, squeaky-clean lecterns and a lot of grey hair.

But Happy Mondays dancer Bez was always going to do things differently.

The 50-year-old, real name Mark Berry, drew 700 ravers in baggy tops and bucket hats to a late-night party in aid of his anti-fracking We Are The Reality Party.

The sold-out gig happened on Saturday night at Manchester's former Granada Studios - the same sprawling venue where Ed Miliband unveiled Labour's manifesto today .

Live bands and Manchester DJs kept the party going until 2am, the Manchester Evening News reported.

Party activists in wigs and sequins even invaded the stage at the end of a set by Bez's band Black Grape.

Frontman Shaun Ryder enthused about being back on stage with the band he started in 1993, saying: "It's 20 years since we made this amazing album and got together with Black Grape."

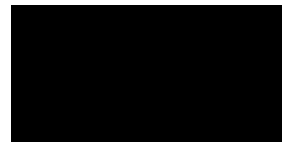
He added the crowd should give their support to Bez or "anyone but the Tories".

The night was also a charity fundraiser for Manchester homeless support group Coffee4Craig, which runs soup kitchens across the city.

Maracas-wielding Bez is standing for the seat of Salford and Eccles on an anti-fracking ticket.

In February he and girlfriend Firouzeh Razavi staged a week-long John Lennon-style 'bed-in' at the five-star [Montcalm](#) Hotel in London.

He said: "It's great. I get to protest, and spend the day in bed, both at the same time



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for this year's Valentine's Day!

"We've not got out of bed for the entire week but it's ok we're still loving each other, it's all good."

Bez will face Tory Greg Downes, Labour's Rebecca Long Bailey, Lib Dem Charlie Briggs, Ukip's Frank Doyle and the Greens' Emma Van Dyke on May 7.

He'll also be fighting candidates from the Trade Union and Socialist Coalition and the Pirate Party.

How do you intend to vote in May's general election? (12 April vote)

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