A tale of two marches and two revolutionary music acts

MAY DAY greetings to one and all, and all the best to those of you scrumming today celebrating the great traditions of the British labour movement — solidarity, inclusiveness and the fight for social justice.

Sadly, we had rather a contrasting march held in Glasgow on Sunday in Brighten — the so-called march for England. Ostensibly a celebration of St George's Day, it seems more about a hundred bigots — hardly any of them from Brighton — shuffling through our pretty promenade... As the march went along, while about 1,000 Brightonians made it very clear to them that they weren't welcome.

Well done to all those who showed up.

Events surrounding the march gave new meaning to the phrase “anti-fascist elements.”

First, the actual seaside road collapsed in protest at the prospect of them walking on it, leaving a big hole. A digest down all through the march — and the sun came out the moment they had left! Although as an atheist Seagulls fan I'm really not bothered about saints of any sort — though I think Lallana, Shaw and maybe Lambert should get a chance in the World Cup. I have no problem if people want to have a march for St George's Day — he's very much a symbol of the multicultural country we've become, being the patron saint of Moscow and Georgia as well as England and also honoured in Bulgaria, Hungary, Portugal and Palestine. And I most certainly will be supporting England during the World Cup.

But why the hell is it that, while the Welsh, the Irish and the Scots can celebrate their national days in a happy, inclusive way, we English have always seemed to have a minority who use it as an excuse for drunken violence and bigotry? Nothing to do with the England I want to live in, that's for sure.

The Saturday before, I was at the Shepherd's Bush Empire in London at a sold-out gig celebrating 30 years of the Men They Couldn't Hang. For me it's one of the great injustices of the history of contemporary music that this inspirational band have never really got the recognition they deserve. Never heard them? Do yourself a favour and put The Colours — Men They Couldn't Hang into Google. I think you might have a very pleasant surprise.

And a couple of days ago I was heading for the Albert in Brighton with some seeing an up-and-coming duo called Sleaford Mods. They sound like literally nothing else on the planet — an incredibly sharp and awesomely shouty ranting post telling it precisely how it is in screwed-up, divided Britain in 2014, backed by his mate dishing out hammering semi-tunes which absolutely complement the words.

No, they're not the Small Faces and they're not for the faint hearted or for people who like nice, comfortable music — there's far too much of that around right now.

They are the most exciting thing I have heard in years — but I didn't get to hear them last Saturday because frontman Jason didn't turn up. It had better be a one-off, because I reckon they are going to be huge.

I was very disappointed, but I did get a well received 20-minute stand in set and a new poem out of it, so all's well that ends well...

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