

batley town hall

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History of Batley Town Hall

Batley Town Hall was built in 1853 originally as the town's Mechanics Institute and paid for by a public subscription fund which raised £2,000. The Institute's aim was to help young men and women improve their education. To this end it provided a large library, classes in elementary writing, reading and arithmetic, a newspaper room and an art and musical appreciation class which led to the founding of the Batley Choral Society and Batley Philharmonic Society.



The fact that its art students were so successful at gaining awards in London exhibitions helped prompt the move to establish a Batley School of Art and Design in the town.

By 1874, however, the general classes were dwindling and the building was first leased and then sold for £3,400 to the recently established Corporation to act as a Town Hall.

In September 1902 the building was extensively damaged by fire. Plans to build a completely new Town Hall in another part of the Square were dropped in favour of redeveloping the old one and adding an extension which included the council chamber, Mayor's Parlour and offices for senior personnel.



The renovated building, together with the extension which provided the Town Hall with a new entrance to the Market Square, was opened in July 1905. The architect for the £15,731 project was local businessman Arthur Hanstock.