

Town Hall

Grade II listed as a fine early 19th century town hall on a key site in conservation area. The war memorial outside the front is also Grade II listed.*

The Town Hall of Cowbridge stood, until 1830, in the middle of the street near the Duke of Wellington. It had long been an impediment to traffic along the main road, and was constantly having to be repaired and repainted, and so when the opportunity came to convert the town's House of Correction into a new Town Hall, it was willingly seized.

An Act of Parliament was passed in 1576, giving permission for a prison or Bridewell in Cowbridge, but the first reference to the House of Correction on this site was in 1725. In 1805 it was rebuilt (using stone from Thomas Wyndham's quarry near West Gate, lime from Stalling Down, Pennant Stone for floor slabs and Bangor slates for roofing). By 1829, a large new prison was built in Swansea, and so the site became available. Revd John Montgomery Traherne of St Hilary had by then had plans and estimates drawn up, so the conversion - using the basic structure of the House of Correction - was rapidly completed under the supervision of Isaiah Verity. The cost was raised by public subscription. Thus the cells (there were separate blocks of cells for men and women) remain, now housing the town museum; one, set out to resemble an original cell, gives a good idea of the squalor and lack of space.

The cupola, housing a new clock - the old one had not worked well after its transfer from the original Guild Hall - was built in 1836 thanks to the generosity of the Bishop of Llandaff, Dr Edward Coplestone, who then lived at Llandough Castle.

Around the Town Hall was the Shambles, housing the butchers' stalls, and walls blocked off both sides of what is now Town Hall Square. In 1895, however, the Town Hall was enlarged (filling in the open sides at the rear) and altered; in 1902 the Fire Brigade headquarters was established in what is now the Lesser Hall and kitchen - and they remained there till the second World War.

1779 Petition of borough of Cowbridge to Justices of Great Sessions for the constituencies of Glamorgan, Brecon & Radnor that the town hall (i.e. the old building opposite the Duke of Wellington) is not in a fit state to receive them.....
Bute papers L39/26-8

Information on the Town Hall obtained from:

House of Correction to Town Hall, Cowbridge, published by Cowbridge Museum Trust, 1988

"Subscriptions towards erecting a new Town-Hall and Market-Place, in the town of Cowbridge.

The Marquess of Bute	£210-0-0	R H Jenkins, Esq	£10-10-0
Rev J M Traherne	£50-0-0	Col Entwisle	£5-0-0
Hon W H Grey	£20-0-0	Rev Dr Llewellyn	£5-5-0
Dvd. Nicholl, Esq	£10-10-0	Daniel Jones, Esq	£10-10-0
Rev Dr Casberd	£5-0-0	John Thomas, Esq	£5-0-0
Thos Lle Williams, Esq	£10-10-0	Mrs Markham	£20-0-0
Edw Ballard, Jun, Esq	£5-5-0	Mrs Knight	£10-10-0
Rev Dr Williams	£21-0-0	Wm Gronow, Esq	£5-0-0
The Earl of Clarendon	£25-0-0	Rev Thos Gronow	£5-0-0
J Verity, Esq	£10-0-0	Lewis Knight, Esq	£20-0-0
Rev John Edwardes	£5-0-0	John Samuel, Esq	£5-0-0

Rev Robt Nicholl	£5-5-0	Sir T D Aubrey, Bart	£20-0-0
Edw Bradley, Esq	£10-10-0	The Principal and Fellows of	
Thos Williams, Jun, Esq	£10-10-0	Jesus College, Oxford	£10-0-0
Rev J Nicholl	£10-10-0	C R M Talbot, Esq	£25-0-0
Rt Hon Sir J Nicholl	£40-0-0	Richd Blakemore, Esq	£10-0-0
Jonathan Howells, Esq	£5-5-0	Richd Rosser, Esq	£5-0-0
Rev Edw Picton	£5-5-0	John Bradley, Esq	£5-0-0
Lle Traherne, Esq	£30-0-0	Cann Wilkins, Esq	£5-5-0
Mrs Powell	£30-0-0	W Nicholl, Esq, MD	£5-5-0
J Bevan, Esq	£5-5-0	Rev Robt Williams	£3-3-0
T W Booker, Esq	£5-5-0	Miss Thomas	£2-0-0
J Edwardes Vaughan, Esq	£5-5-0	Rev Thos Davies	£1-0-0
Mrs Llewelin	£10-0-0	J N Miers, Esq	£1-1-0
Sir C Cole, MP	£20-0-0	Elias Bassett, Esq	£1-1-0
Rev Henry Llewelin	£5-5-0	Lord James Stuart	£25-0-0
J F Gwyn, Esq	£10-10-0		

The building of the New Town Hall and Market place having been commenced, those subscribers who have not paid their subscriptions are requested to transmit the same to Mr T Llewelin Williams, Cowbridge; and any other persons wishing to subscribe are requested to signify the same to Mr Williams. Cowbridge, March 16, 1830 *Cambrian, 27/3/1830*

1901 Caretaker's house: John Pike, gardener, 71, b Whinkly, Devon + w + daughter *Census#187*

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House of Correction – built for the Court of Quarter Sessions 1806. Later sold to the Borough of Cowbridge and converted into a Town Hall.