

# CHELTENHAM TOWN HALL



**A HISTORY**

**ELEGANT GRADE II LISTED BUILDING**

**A VENUE FOR THE MANY BALLS AND CONCERTS WHICH MADE UP THE TOWN'S SOCIAL CALENDAR.**

## A VENUE FOR ALL OCCASIONS

Until the year 1900, the role of Cheltenham's main venue for Balls and Concerts had been filled by the old Assembly Rooms in the High Street, and it was their demolition to make way for a bank that prompted the Council to build a new, and much larger, Hall on a new site.

The site chosen was a former bowling green, a part of Imperial Square, which at that time contained not only gardens but the large glass and steel Winter Gardens building, which has since been demolished.

## MR WALLER A GLOUCESTER ARCHITECT

The designs for the building, which was built of freestone in a heavy classical or Baroque style, were provided by a Gloucester architect, Frederick William Waller, and the actual building work was undertaken by a Cheltenham firm, Messrs. Collins and Godfrey.



Cheltenham Town Hall c. 1910

## A FOUNDATION AND AN M.P.

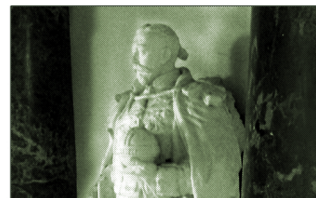
The total cost of the building, including internal decoration, fixtures and fittings, was around £45,000.

The builders took possession of the site in December 1901, and on October 1st 1902, the foundation stone of the building, which can still be seen on its exterior, was laid by the Mayor, George Norman. As was the custom, a bottle containing coins, and copies of local newspapers of the day were placed behind the stone. The new Town Hall was rapidly built, and a little over a year later, on December 5th 1903, it was formally opened by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach MP, a former Chancellor of the Exchequer, and a man whose family had long-standing connections with Cheltenham.

## MAIN HALL A CENTREPIECE

The centrepiece of the Town Hall is its main Hall, distinguished by its Corinthian style columns and coved ceiling. It measures 92 feet x 52 feet, and is 53 feet high. In all, including balcony seating, it holds up to 1000 people, twice the number possible in the old Assembly Rooms. Its large floor is particularly suitable for dances.

## THE STATUES A GIFT



In 1916, two plaster-cast statues of King Edward VII and King George V, in coronation robes, made by Messrs R. L. Boulton & Sons of Cheltenham were placed in alcoves on either side of the main stage. One was a gift from Mr. T.E. Whittaker and the other a gift from Messrs. Boulton themselves. The Town Hall organ was also a gift, from Mr. and Mrs. Edward J. Burrow, and was installed in 1928.



## A NEW SPA WELL A NEW CENTURY

The Town Hall also included dining and drawing rooms, and other offices, and to the left of the entrance hall, the Central Spa, opened in June 1906 in order to make the Cheltenham Spa waters available to residents and visitors, in a central location. The octagonal counter, and urns, which are of Doulton ware, can still be seen.

Although the water was for some time transported from the Pittville Pump Room to the Town Hall, the only place to taste the Cheltenham Waters today, is at the Pump Room itself.



## STUNNING VENUE PUBLIC & PRIVATE

The Town Hall is now used for concerts, banquets, meetings, dances, balls, exhibitions, conferences and a major home for many of Cheltenham's festivals.

For more information about what goes on at the Town Hall throughout the year, visit our website at [www.cheltenhamtownhall.org.uk](http://www.cheltenhamtownhall.org.uk) or send us an email to [boxoffice@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:boxoffice@cheltenham.gov.uk).

### MORE INFO:

The Cheltenham Town Hall is available to hire all year round.  
Send an email to [townhall@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:townhall@cheltenham.gov.uk).



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