

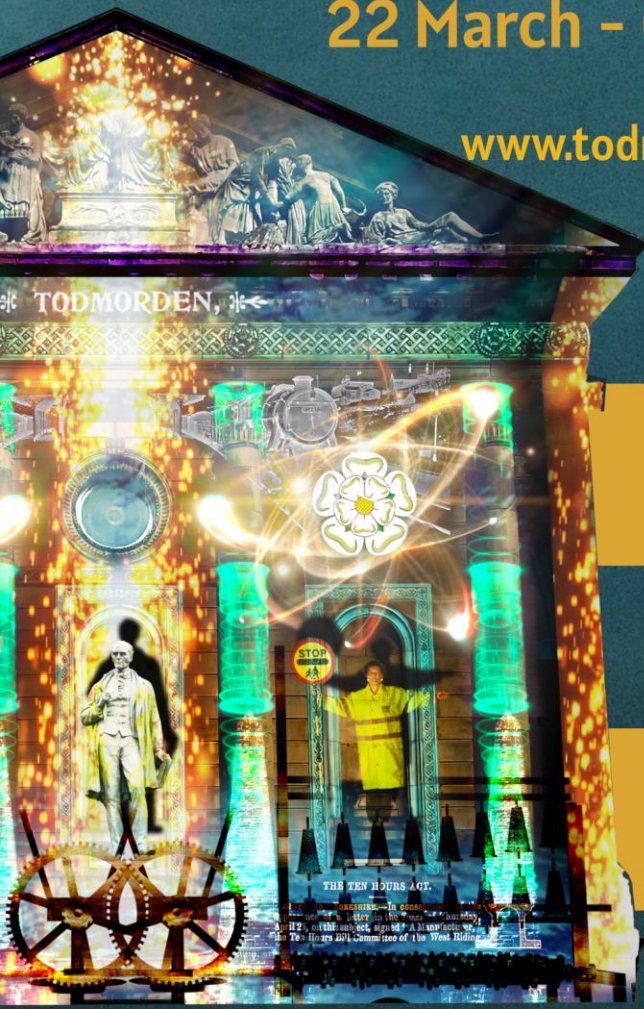
# TODMORDEN TOWN HALL



## 150th Anniversary

22 March - 6 April 2025

[www.todmordentownhall.info](http://www.todmordentownhall.info)



**FREE EVENTS  
FOR EVERYONE**

**Friends of Todmorden  
Town Hall  
[todmordentownhall.info](http://todmordentownhall.info)**

# *In the beginning...*

**Todmorden Town Hall opened on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1875 amidst festivities on an extraordinary scale.**

Triumphal arches were set up across the streets, with flags, banners and streamers decorating homes and shops. A great procession numbering 4000 people marched for four hours in driving rain right up to Gauxholme, Dobroyd Castle, Centre Vale, and Lobb Mill. Nine brass bands accompanied the crowd which included people from Bolton, Burnley, Oldham, Bradford and Leeds brought in by special trains. A statue of John Fielden was unveiled and a nine course banquet was laid on for 400 special guests.

150 years later, much has changed in Todmorden but the Town Hall remains at the heart of the community. For a small town, Todmorden has an exceptional architectural heritage, with the Grade 1 listed Town Hall being an outstanding example. Visitors are taken aback by the grandeur of this beautiful building and the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary is something to celebrate. Like in 1875, we want to involve the whole town.

We talked to the community and have **designed a series of events which we hope has something for everyone.** The centrepiece is our projection mapped film (pg 7) which uses the architecture of the building to tell an artistic story of the town and its people past and present. But we've got lots more going on too! Events are free/donation so why not take the opportunity to try something new?

We hope that just like the grand opening, the 150<sup>th</sup> celebrations will be long remembered, though fingers-crossed we can do without the rain this time!

*Friends of Todmorden Town Hall*

*“Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1875 was a day which will be long remembered in Todmorden not only on account of the stirring and important events which took place - the opening of the new Town Hall and the unveiling of the statue of the late Mr John Fielden - but on account of the extremely unpropitious weather in the midst of which these ceremonials were witnessed by a vast concourse of people from all parts of the Todmorden valley”*

Bradford Observer  
5/4/1875



*150<sup>th</sup> logo on front page designed by Mia Candlin,  
Todmorden High student*

# *It's our heritage*

Todmorden in 1875 was a thriving mill town, well connected by canal, rail and road, with much employment in cotton mills. The town centre was already well built up, and the increasing population (more than now) and the development of local government made a Town Hall necessary. The Local Board of elected members met in the Golden Lion, and the local justice system had to send prisoners further afield and hear cases in makeshift courts.

However, while establishing the need for a town hall was simple, actually building it was not, with several companies establishing the project and then failing. Early designs were put forward and a site selected which involved constructing a culvert for Walsden Water to run under the site, and the Yorkshire – Lancashire county boundary running through the middle. An architect was appointed who proposed a civic hall above a market area, but this got no further than foundations before again foundering on the rocks of an economic downturn due to the American Civil War.

*Continued on pg 10*

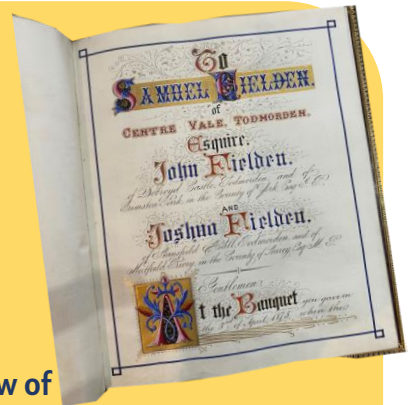
## **Exhibition 23 March-6 April**

A display of costumes, objects, and photographs telling the story of the magnificent Town Hall.

### **LAUNCH EVENT – SUNDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> MARCH 3pm -4.30pm**

**Drop in for drinks and nibbles and a preview of the exhibition**

The exhibition will then be open 10am-2pm every day except Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> when it is only open 2-4pm.  
No need to book, just drop in. Knowledgeable guides on hand.



## **TICKET INFORMATION**

Thanks to our funders, tickets are free for all 150<sup>th</sup> events so feel free to help yourselves. Please help us by booking in advance though there may be some tickets on the door. However if you would like to, we encourage you to donate for your ticket. All donations will go to the individual organisations to help our cultural groups thrive for many more decades. Tickets available from Todmorden Information Centre, Burnley Rd, or [www.todmordentownhall.info](http://www.todmordentownhall.info)

# Todmorden Orchestra Heritage Performance

Saturday 22 March 7.30 - 9.30pm

Todmorden has a long musical tradition with choral and instrumental societies. Concerts were given in various halls and churches until the Town Hall was opened where the orchestra has performed ever since.

## Programme

"A Celebration" - Tim Benjamin (Todmorden based composer)

Violin Concerto - Brahms. Soloist Martyn Jackson  
(Todmorden-raised violinist - pictured)

## Interval

Coronation March "Crown Imperial" - William Walton (born in Oldham)

Fantasia on Auld Lang Syne - Ernest Tomlinson (born in Rawtenstall, Lancs)

The Banks of Green Willow -- George Butterworth (spent his childhood in York)

Pomp and Circumstance March no 4 - Edward Elgar (had ties with Settle)



TICKETS Free / donation from Todmorden Information Centre,  
or scan QR code - [todmordentownhall.info](http://todmordentownhall.info)

A colorful poster for a disco event. The word "DISCO" is written in large, red, bubbly letters at the top. Below it, "FOR THE YOUNG OF ALL AGES" is written in blue and green. The date "SUNDAY 23rd MARCH" and time "4-6.30pm" are in green. A central graphic is a disco ball with a blue and white grid pattern and a green star. To the right, it says "FEATURING DJ Mick Fuzz &amp; Friends". Below the disco ball, it says "TICKETS FREE OR DONATION" in white on a red and blue background. At the bottom, it says "Pizza &amp; Treats Available for Purchase" and "Lionesses of the valley and Foodshare". A circular logo at the bottom right says "150" with a crown and a rose, indicating the 150th anniversary of the Town Hall. The background is white with green and blue wavy borders.

## DISCO FOR THE YOUNG OF ALL AGES

Sunday 23 March  
4-6.30pm

Come and get your groove on  
with DJ Mick Fuzz & Friends

Kids discos used to be regular and popular events at the Town Hall. We're reviving the spirit but why should it only be the children who get to have the fun? So bring your little ones and big ones and be prepared to throw some moves (and don't worry if you don't know any moves, we'll be around to teach you a few 😊)

# Community Iftar – Wed 26<sup>th</sup> March

Iftar is the meal served at the end of the day during Ramadan, to break the day's fast together. Iftar is eaten at sunset when the Maghrib prayer is announced.

Every year, Integrate Todmorden has invited the wider Todmorden community to join the Muslim community in a big shared meal at the Town Hall **This year, to mark the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary**

**there will be a special focus on the heritage of our South Asian community**

If you would like to take part, please email  
[info@integratetodmorden.org](mailto:info@integratetodmorden.org)



# Town Hall Voices Friday 28<sup>th</sup> March

We bring you "Town Hall Voices", the much-loved Todmorden Hippodrome writing competition reworked especially for the Town Hall's anniversary. A shortlist of scripts written to celebrate the Town Hall will be presented in a specially created studio within the ballroom. Performed by members of TAODS, the group that own and run the Hippodrome, this will be a great way to enjoy local talent in abundance! The winning script will be announced on the night, as well as a vote for the Audience Award.

**Tickets**  
**Free / Donation**  
[www.todmordentownhall.info](http://www.todmordentownhall.info)



TAODS proudly present



# Town Hall Voices

A script-writing competition to celebrate  
Todmorden Town Hall's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!



# Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> March and

This is our main weekend with the specially commissioned theatre piece and projection mapped film. Not to be missed!

**Tickets**  
**Free / Donation**  
[www.todmordentownhall.info](http://www.todmordentownhall.info)



## Tod Life – a promenade play

Come and see fascinating snippets of life in the Town Hall played in the actual rooms in which they took place. With a cast of local residents, we will be taking a humorous glimpse into history and a quick peek into life behind the scenes of our iconic building. Book early to avoid disappointment as there is limited capacity for each performance.

Look out for our living statue of John Fielden – back where he started outside the Town Hall

### Performances:

Saturday 29 March: 1pm and 4pm

Sunday 30 March: 11am 1pm 4pm

Capacity of 75 per show, one hour long



Access  
arrangements

This event will divide the audience into groups and uses a variety of rooms and routes around the Town Hall, including stairs. An accessible route is available by arrangement

*Written by Joyce Branagh, Producer/Director Katrina Heath*

# Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> March

## Projection Mapping Film

We are so excited to be able to bring you this spectacular event. We have worked with an arts company, Illuminos, based just over the border (shshhh!) to make a short film featuring Todmorden, and its people past and present. It will be projected onto the front of the Town Hall using the fantastic architecture as part of this visual story of the life of our town and its hall.

We're grateful to all the residents who shared fascinating stories about their connection to the Town Hall, many of which are woven into the film.

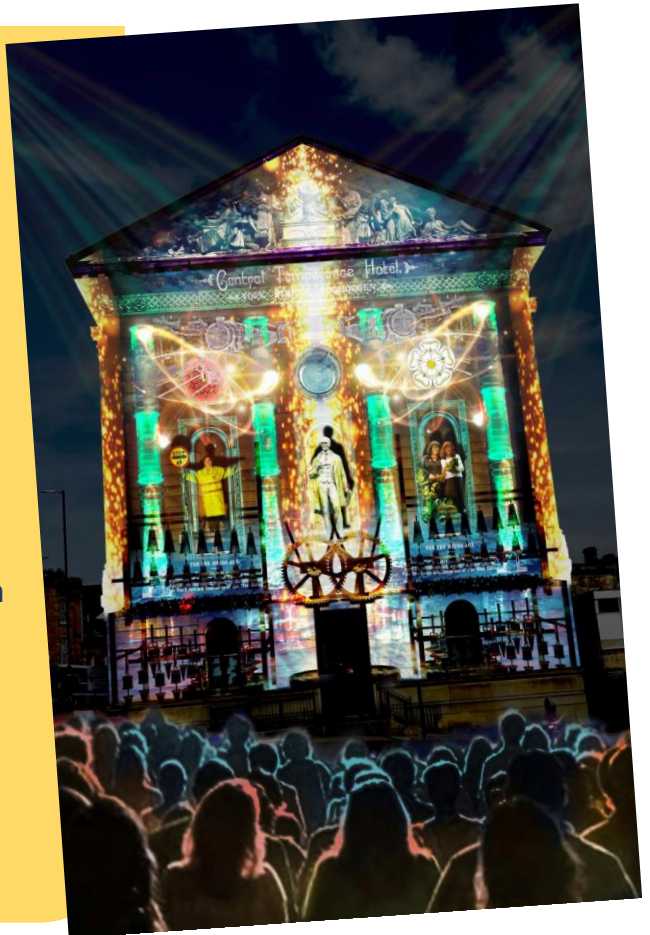
**No need to book for this event – just come down to the Town Hall**

### Performance Times

**Saturday 29<sup>th</sup>: 7.30pm, 8pm and then every 15 minutes from 8.30pm last performance at 9.30**

**Sunday 30<sup>th</sup>: every 15 minutes from 8.30pm. Last performance 9.30pm**

*Please don't all come at once early Saturday evening – maybe leave those spaces for people with young families?*



## Community Banquet – 3<sup>rd</sup> April

On the actual anniversary of the Town Hall opening we will be reflecting the historic banquet that took place for 400 special guests.

Our banquet will be for the ordinary amazing people of our community. We would love to invite you all, but even our grand Town Hall has its limits.

So we will be inviting those who volunteer their time for free, from those who run our children's clubs, to those who look after the vulnerable, to those who keep our town blooming lovely.

The remaining tickets will be distributed by postcode lottery as the fairest way to make sure we have a diversity of residents round the table.

## A Festival of Music-Making Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> April

Music has always played a central role in the life of our Town Hall. The first concert was held within days of the grand opening, followed swiftly by a performance by Todmorden Music Society. So began a long association with Todmorden's Orchestra (who launched our 150<sup>th</sup> fortnight) and Choral Society (separate entities since 1915). Since then the ballroom has hosted many renowned musicians such as local trombonist Geoff Love and even punk bands, with Crass performing in 1981.

So what more fitting way to end our fortnight of anniversary celebrations by offering a flavour of Todmorden's current musical life.



### **TICKETS are free/donation**

Tickets not needed for afternoon workshops, the Nasheeds choir and the Brass Band. For the Cantata, the Choral Society and the Gospel Choir, tickets will also likely be available on the door but it helps us if you can book in advance. Tickets are free, but donations are very welcome. You can donate to the particular organisation when booking your ticket online, or at the event itself. Book online at [todmordentownhall.info](http://todmordentownhall.info) or at the Todmorden Information Centre



# 5<sup>th</sup> April – Musical Line-up

**12 noon: Nasheeds** - a celebration of Islamic song with Music 4 Many.



## 2pm – Todmorden Community Brass Band.



The band was formed in 2001 after various actions left the town without its historic brass band. We're a community band all ages and abilities, and we're often out and about supporting community events.

## 4pm: Todmorden Cantata

Music for the Many: 150 years of Todmorden life told in music.



## 6pm: Todmorden Choral Society: *A Musical Celebration*

A varied programme including Handel's *Coronation Anthems*, the premiere of locally-based composer Adrian Guy's *The Psalmist*, and extracts from Gilbert and Sullivan's *Trial By Jury* (first performed in 1875).

9pm: Late-night music with Three Valleys Gospel Choir



## Workshops (downstairs)

*No need to book but please turn up on time*

12.30-1.30 pm – try an instrument with Liz from the Brass Band

2.30pm - Have a go at singing with 3 Valleys Gospel Choir and learn a song to be able to join their later performance

## Final Event – Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> April – 2pm

Free Guided Tour of the Town Hall with the Friends of Todmorden Town Hall volunteer tour guides.

Plus your last chance to see our exhibition open 10am – 2pm

## ...A bit more heritage

*Continued from pg 3*

The untouched site was sold at auction to John Fielden (junior), who appointed a different architect, John Gibson, who designed the building as we know it (as well as Fielden Hall, Stansfield Hall, the Unitarian Church and Dobroyd Castle)

**You can't live for long in Todmorden without realising the impact of the Fielden family.** Like many cotton mill owners, their wealth was built on slavery in the cotton plantations of America and they became one of the wealthiest families in the country. At the height they owned 11 mills and employed around 1700 people in the town. John Fielden senior was known as 'Honest John', working in parliament to limit the working day for women and young people to 10 hours. Ten hours a day sounds outrageous now, but at the time it was so radical that people in the town and far afield raised money to commission the statue that was unveiled at the Town Hall opening and now stands in Centre Vale Park.

**The sons of John Fielden gifted the Town Hall to the town and its people,** and though they didn't want any fanfare or ostentation when they handed over the keys, we think it only right that Samuel, John and Joshua appear, even temporarily in our film, on the empty plinths that many assume were designed for their statues.



*As part of the 150<sup>th</sup> project we've been collecting stories and artefacts about the Town Hall, some of which you can see in the exhibition. Some of these we have woven into our theatre performance or projection mapped film, such as the children from Ferney Lee modelling denim jackets for the 1980s BBC Clothes Show production, or the undertaker with the dragon tattoo (!). But all the stories we will keep for the archive, and perhaps they'll be revisited for the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary?*

# VOLUNTEER WITH US – could you help steward or do surveys? Please contact [Volunteer150th@gmail.com](mailto:Volunteer150th@gmail.com)

## Our Thank-Yous

The 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary was organised by a voluntary steering group of the Friends of Todmorden Town Hall: Linda Carroll-Bentley, Mike Stephens, Linda Levick, June Turner, Susan Press, Margaret Holmstedt, Cynthia Murray, Anne Mealia, Katrina Heath, Silvia Dacre, Clare Danon and Clare Pickard, supported by Catherine Bann (Calderdale Council) as Event Producer.

Thanks to Angela Rice and Stevie Day, Town Hall managers and Anne Fleming, volunteer coordinator.

Special thanks to our partner organisations including, John Moorhouse (Orchestra), Emma Stafford (Choral Society), Jenny Sheldon & Daniel Bath (Music4theMany), Nadeem Mir (IntegrateTodmorden), Justine Sutcliffe (Hippodrome), Anne Butterworth (Community Brass Band), Lynne Midwinter (3VGospel Choir) Isy, Mary & Hilary (banquet), Bex (Lionesses of the Valley), Mick Fuzz (The Makery), Katrina Heath and Joyce Branagh (promenade play), Giddykipper Arts (statue), Linda Levick (exhibition), St Mary's bellringers and to Todmorden Information Centre for all their support.

Thanks to all our volunteers who have helped us steward, survey and pull these events together, too many to name here. Thanks to the wonderful residents of Todmorden, some of whom dreamt up the initial ideas 2 years ago, many of whom shared their stories.

Thanks to Illuminos for our projection film, Leeway film event managers, and Cuturedale for their support. Congratulations to Mia Candlin who won the logo design competition and to all the students and staff at our participating schools, Todmorden High, Calder High & Calderdale College

And of course, a big thank you to our funders, Heritage Lottery, Calderdale Council, Todmorden Town Council, Reaps Moss and Crook Hill Community Benefit Fund and Todmorden Wind Farm.

## Where to eat – support our local businesses!

*Todmorden is blessed with a fantastic market and numerous independent cafes, bars, pubs and takeaways in the town centre. Why not have a wander and find one to suit. For evening food in the town centre, the info below may be helpful:*

Hardie's - Tapas & grills 54 Burnley Rd - <https://hardies-todmorden.co.uk> 07833 470087

Three Wise Monkeys –Thai food - 15 Water St [Facebook.com/ThreeWiseMonkeysLtd/](https://facebook.com/ThreeWiseMonkeysLtd/). 01706 817010

Golden Lion - traditional Thai food. 01706 816333. Fielden Square, [goldenliontodmorden.com](https://goldenliontodmorden.com)

Site Pizzeria wood-fired, 43 Rochdale Rd, Todmorden 01706 815606 [sitepizzeria.co.uk](https://sitepizzeria.co.uk)

Country Pizza - stone baked pizza [1 White Hart Fold](https://1WhiteHartFold.com), 01706 614737 - [countrypizza.uk](https://countrypizza.uk)

The Vedas - Spacious Indian restaurant. Rochdale Rd 01706 814009 [thevedas.co.uk](https://thevedas.co.uk)

Honest John Greek themed menu 6 Rochdale Rd, 01706 815646 [facebook.com/Thehonestjohn/](https://facebook.com/Thehonestjohn/)

# WHAT'S ON at a glance...

<b>Sat</b>	<b>22 March</b> Todmorden Orchestra Heritage Performance 7.30pm	<b>29 March</b> Exhibition 2-4pm  Promenade Theatre Various times during day  Projected Film from 7.30pm	<b>5 April</b> Exhibition 10am-2pm  Music Festival all day Music4Many, Nasheeds Choir, Brass Band, Choral Society & 3 Valleys Gospel Choir
<b>Sun</b>	<b>23 March</b> Exhibition Launch 3pm  Disco for the Young of All Ages 4pm-6.30pm	<b>30 March</b> Exhibition 2-4pm  Promenade Theatre Various times during day  Projected Film from 8.30pm	<b>6 April</b> Exhibition 10am-2pm  Town Hall Heritage Tour 2pm
<b>Mon</b>	<b>24 March</b> Exhibition 10am-2pm	<b>31 March</b> Exhibition 10am-2pm	
<b>Tues</b>	<b>25 March</b> Exhibition 10am-2pm	<b>1 April</b> Exhibition 10am-2pm	
<b>Wed</b>	<b>26 March</b> Exhibition 10am-2pm  Community Iftar	<b>2 April</b> Exhibition 10am-2pm	
<b>Thurs</b>	<b>27 March</b> Exhibition 10am-2pm	<b>3 April</b> Exhibition 10am-2pm  Community Banquet	
<b>Fri</b>	<b>28 March</b> Exhibition 10am-2pm  Town Hall Voices by Tod Hippodrome	<b>4 April</b> Exhibition 10am-2pm	



Tickets available from Todmorden Information Centre or online: scan the QR code or go to [www.todmordentownhall.info/events](http://www.todmordentownhall.info/events)



Supported by Calderdale Council



Todmorden Town Council

Reaps Moss & Crook Hill  
Community Benefit Fund  
Todmorden Wind Farm



COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION  
FOR CALDERDALE



THE TEN HOURS ACT

...the Ten Hours Bill Committee of the Yes: Bill...