

Origins of the Club

Sowerby Bridge Church Institute Cricket Club was founded as Christ Church Cricket Club around 1880.

Church and Sunday School were at the centre of community life in Victorian England and it was common for them to embrace many aspects of their members' lives. When a cricket club was instigated by the Young Men's Class of Christ Church, which met at the Town Hall in Sowerby Bridge, it was consistent with the pattern across the industrial north and midlands. Most players attended Christ Church and, catering for numerous leisure activities, the Institute was the church's social and sporting arm.

After a decade playing challenge matches against other local teams, Christ Church C.C. was swept along in the rush towards the formation of leagues in cricket, association football and rugby football around 1890. The 'Sowerby Bridge Division Cricket League' was one of hundreds formed at this time and Christ Church C.C. was playing in it by 1894.

Possibly to avoid confusion with other clubs of ecclesiastical origin, the club became known as Sowerby Bridge Christ Church and by 1908 was playing under the name of Sowerby Bridge Church Institute, a mouthful quickly abbreviated to S.B.C.I..

During a financial crisis at the Institute in the early 1930s, brought about in part by economic depression, the cricket club was told it would no longer receive financial support. The members responded by making the club financially independent and since then the club has grown apart from its roots. Nevertheless, the land, although controlled by the cricket club, is still held by church trustees and, in a tradition dating to the early days, the Vicar of Christ Church is still the cricket club's president.