

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

PROMENADE GARDENS, LYTHAM ST ANNE'S

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**PROMENADE GARDENS, LYTHAM ST ANNE'S**

Name: PROMENADE GARDENS, LYTHAM ST ANNE'S

County: Lancashire

District: Fylde (District Authority)

Parish: Saint Anne's on the Sea

label.localisation: Latitude: 53.746931

Longitude: -3.0307244

National Grid Reference: SD 32124 28333

[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1001491

Date first listed: 27-Feb-2001

## Details

A late C19/early C20 municipal seaside promenade, laid out on the site of former sand dunes, including an informal lake with bridge, grotto, and waterfall built by Pulham and Sons, 1913-14.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The Land and Building Company of St Anne's established the town of St Anne's in 1875 as a response to the growth of the holiday trade in the neighbouring resorts of Blackpool and Lytham. The town was named after St Anne's church (1873) which was the first building in the area. The pier, which extended the central town axis westwards, was opened in 1885. In 1896 the first St Anne's Improvement Act led to the laying out of a length of designed pleasure gardens extending south-east from the pier, which later became known as North Promenade Gardens. These were linked by walks and a promenade, designed by Mr E Thomas, and further features were added in the following years (Scott Wilson 2000).

In 1913-14 South Promenade Gardens were laid out, at a cost of £2600 (Lytham St Anne's Express, 29 May 1914), by Messrs Pulham and Sons on former sand dunes, using nearly 1000 tonnes of rock from Derbyshire and Clitheroe. The principal feature of this area was an ornamental lake with stepping stones, a waterfall over a grotto, and a footbridge. Adjacent was created an Alpine and Herbaceous Garden. Promenade Gardens was subsequently described as 'the prettiest esplanade in the country' (ibid). The 1914 St Anne's Improvement Act prompted further improvements associated with Promenade Gardens, including in 1916 the construction of open-air baths on the foreshore to the west of the Promenade, and the provision of a miniature golf course to the south of this.

The site remains (2001) in the ownership of Fylde Borough Council, and continues in use as a public promenade.

### DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Promenade Gardens bounds the south-west side of the town of St Anne's, dividing the town from the Irish Sea to the west. The Gardens are bounded to the north-east by South Promenade road and beyond this by a few remaining late C19 and early C20 hotels and boarding houses, interspersed with mid to late C20 hotels and blocks of flats. To the north-west and south-east the site is flanked by sand dunes, similar to those from which it was developed initially. The site is largely open along its boundaries, allowing access from many points. The 900m long, c 4.5ha

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site comprises two long, narrow, contiguous areas: North Promenade Gardens, extending south-east from St Anne's Pier as far as Hornby Road; and the slightly later South Promenade Gardens, extending south-east from Hornby Road to Fairhaven Road. The setting is urban to the north-east, and marine to the south-west. A boating lake, leisure centre with swimming pool, and miniature golf course (all outside the area here registered) lie adjacent on the foreshore, largely dividing the site from the open sea beyond. Panoramic views extend west and south-west from the site over the sea towards the Isles of Man and Anglesey respectively.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** The principal approach to the Promenade is from the town to the north-east, via St Anne's Road West, the principal axis around which the town was constructed. St Anne's Road West leads south-west, across South Promenade road, to a forecourt (now a car park, 2001) in front of the Pier (1885, listed grade II; outside the area here registered). The entrance pavilion to the pier is in Vernacular Revival style, of brick with half timbering. The 350m long, cast-iron pier extends south-west from the entrance pavilion to a main pavilion which overlooks Promenade Gardens to the south-east. The forecourt is flanked by a small section of North Promenade Gardens to the north-west, from which it is divided by a mid C20 shelter, with the majority of the Gardens extending south-east from the forecourt.

A further entrance to the Gardens lies opposite East Bank Road, 350m south-east of the Pier, giving access to a broad path which bisects North Promenade Gardens, and leads south-west across the promenade walk to the boating lake and leisure centre beyond.

The site can also be entered on the north-east side via a series of further paths which lead from South Promenade road, giving direct access to the various garden compartments.

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** Promenade Gardens is divided into two long, narrow, contiguous areas: North Promenade Gardens, and South Promenade Gardens. These two areas are directly linked by the 800m long promenade walk which bounds them both to the south-west. The areas are laid out in a series of contiguous compartments, each of which is largely enclosed by shrub-planted, irregularly shaped banks. The banks are formed from the earlier sand dunes, and in many places are retained or edged by characteristic white limestone walling. The banks are separated by paths, these also lined by irregularly shaped white limestone and in some places by artificial stone. The paths give access to South Promenade road to the north-east and the promenade walk and foreshore to the south-west. Views extend from the paths towards St Anne's and the sea. North Promenade Gardens, laid out in the late 1890s and early 1900s (Scott Wilson 2000; OS 1911), comprises seven linked compartments. North-west of the pier forecourt lies a rectangular compartment with a late C20 shelter at the north-west end, overlooking a lawn divided by paths laid out in cruciform pattern, with a central sunken area. This compartment is bounded to the south-west by a late C20 brick wall and to the north-east by irregularly shaped white stones, beyond which it is overlooked from North Promenade road. The south-east boundary is defined by a mid C20 brick shelter with a central arch giving access to the forecourt.

South-east of the pier forecourt, overlooked by the entrance to the pier, the second compartment is dominated by an octagonal cast-iron bandstand (c 1900, listed grade II) which stands on a sandstone base and is partly enclosed by a kidney-shaped boating pool on the north-east side. From here a path leads south-east, passing a monument (W B Rhind c 1890, listed grade II) comprising a statue of a lifeboatman set on a plinth, standing 100m south-east of the pier. The monument, overlooking the sea to the south-west, commemorates the crew of the St Anne's lifeboat who lost their lives in 1886 attempting to rescue the crew of the German barque Mexico. This was one of the first ornamental features on the Promenade. From here the path continues south-east into the third compartment, at the centre of which stands the Octagonal Pavilion (c 1900, listed grade II), a delicately ornamented shelter built of cast-iron mounted on a sandstone plinth, and flanked by beds and lawns to north-west and south-east. The path continues south-east into the fourth compartment, a larger area laid out with irregularly shaped lawns, at the centre of which stands an elaborate two-tier, cast-iron circular fountain (c 1900). The area is separated from the promenade walk beyond to the south-west by shrub-planted banks, into the south-west edges of which are set two rectangular shelters (c 1900, listed grade II) built of cast-iron and wood, with glass panels. The shelters are linked with the Gardens to the north-east by paths between the banks, and enjoy views south-west over the foreshore to the sea.

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At the south-east end of the fountain compartment a path leads into the fifth compartment, flanked to north-east by an open lawn, and to the south-east and south-west by banks. At the centre of the area lies a row of three circular seasonal bedding beds, the central one having formerly been the site of a further shelter or other ornamental structure (OS 1911, 1932). Paths lead south-east and south-west out of this area, giving access to the broad cross-path linking the leisure centre to the south-west with East Bank Road and South Promenade road to the north-east. An ornamental cast-iron drinking fountain set on a sandstone plinth stands close to the junction of the path with South Promenade road, 350m south-east of the pier. To the south-east of the cross-path lies the sixth compartment of North Promenade Gardens, a grass mound planted in places with shrubs. A central viewing area occupies the level top of this feature, the viewing area being reached via several paths from South Promenade road to the north-east and the promenade walk to the south-west. One of the paths from South Promenade road is surfaced with an ornamental pattern of pebbles. To the south-east of the mound, 425m south-east of the pier, lies the seventh compartment, containing an oval paddling pool set in tarmac. This stone-edged pool is largely encircled by an amphitheatre of three terraces of brick and concrete seating. The amphitheatre is set within raised banks planted with shrubs, from which it is divided by an informal white stone wall. This compartment marks the south-east end of North Promenade Gardens.

A serpentine path, lying 475m south-east of the pier and giving access from Hornby Road, separates North Promenade Gardens from South Promenade Gardens (largely laid out 1913(14), which are divided into three main compartments. The north-west end of South Promenade Gardens is occupied by the putting green. The c 100m long green is laid to lawn and enclosed by low grassy banks, partly planted with shrubs, with views south-west across the miniature golf course (outside the area here registered) towards the sea. To the south-east of the putting green lies the Ornamental Lake and Alpine Garden. The irregularly shaped lake is sunk below high banking to the south-west, sheltering it from the foreshore and sea beyond. The lake is open to the north-east towards South Promenade road and the properties lining the north-east side of the road. The lake, set with several islands, is divided by a white limestone edging from the surrounding path. The northern end of the lake and the adjacent path are crossed by a single-arched white limestone bridge standing 650m south-east of the pier. The bridge carries an ornamental pebble path connecting the two sides of the lake, its paving depicting various marine motifs including a lighthouse and an anchor. To the north-east of the bridge, beyond South Promenade road, stands the red-brick Grand Hotel (F W Catterall 1897, listed grade II; outside the area here registered), which overlooks the lake. The Hotel is divided from the road by a brick garden wall (also listed grade II; outside the area here registered). Towards the southern end of the lake, on the south-west side, a grotto is let into the bank 700m south-east of the pier. A waterfall runs over the grotto roof, cascading into the lake. A shelter stands on top of the bank nearby.

The lake is bounded to the south-east by a further path linking South Promenade road with the promenade walk, beyond which lies the third compartment of South Promenade Gardens. This is laid out with a network of paths sunk between high grassy mounds and banks. A stone shelter overlooks the promenade walk, to the dunes and sea beyond. This compartment forms the south-east end of the South Promenade gardens, beyond which the foreshore returns largely to dunes.

#### REFERENCES

Lytham St Anne's Express, 29 May 1914 Historical Appraisal of the Promenade Gardens St Anne's for Fylde Borough Council, (Scott Wilson Resource Consultants 2000)

Maps OS 6" to 1 mile: 2nd edition published 1898 OS 25" to 1 mile: 3rd edition published 1911 1932 edition

Description written: February 2001 Amended: March 2001 Register Inspector: SR Edited: April 2001

## Legal

This garden or other land is registered under the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 within the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens by Historic England for its special historic interest.