

A former caretaker's cottage with attached changing rooms in the form of a miniature Georgian crescent which flanks a P-shaped pool dating from 1815, altered and extended in c1910.

It was built by a local builder called Newton, possibly to a design by the local architect John Pinch. The two storey cottage is constructed of painted limestone ashlar, with a slate roof with moulded kneelers and stacks to the gable ends. It has a single-depth plan with a convex rear. Together with a row of six cubicles attached to either side it forms a miniature Georgian crescent. The cottage has a central entrance to the south with three sash windows with glazing bars above and one sash window to its right. The north front has an arched opening giving access to the changing rooms and the main P-shaped pool. There are three casement windows on first floor level and sash windows with glazing bars on either side on ground floor level. There are false windows on first floor level of the east and west gable ends. On the north side, there are a number of cubicles with wood panelled doors.

INTERIOR: There are a number of original features surviving within the baths including a panelled ceiling in lobby of cottage on the ground floor, four-panelled doors and architraves to first floor rooms, early C19 hob grate in first floor bedroom to east, and early C19 fireplace and range in ground floor room to west. Several early C20 coat hooks and wooden seats remain in the changing rooms. The Cleveland Baths are accessed via a gate on Hampton Row which leads to a steep path down to the baths site and to the River Avon. The baths are situated within a walled garden with mature trees, bounded by the river, and were formerly adorned with seats (see OS 1886). A second, rectangular pool was created between 1852 and 1861, circa 8 metres east of the main pool, with a rockery and shelter at either end dating from circa 1910-15.

HISTORY: The Cleveland Baths were built in 1815 as public pleasure baths, on land owned by the Duke of Cleveland. The main builder of the Baths, named Newton, may have been involved in the design of the pools, but alternatively John Pinch, a local architect, may have contributed to the design as he was one of the subscribers.

SUMMARY OF IMPORTANCE: The Cleveland Baths, dating from 1815, are believed to be the oldest surviving public outdoor swimming pools in England. Their layout, in the shape of a miniature Georgian crescent, and place within the (social) history of outdoor swimming, make them unique both within the Bath World Heritage Site and on national level. They are of particular interest as an expression of the continuing importance of 'bathing' at Bath and as one of only a small number of pre-Victorian recreational/sporting buildings to survive nationally.