

THE HISTORY OF YOUR AREA

Parsons Green takes its name from the local Rector's house which stood close by and who reportedly used it as his private bowling green.

In 1625 only six inhabitants were recorded as living in the area but by the eighteenth century it had become popular with the gentry who built large 'villas' for use as country retreats.

The author of Clarissa, Samuel Richardson lived in a magnificent house facing the Green. The same house had been used by Catherine of Aragon after the death of her husband Arthur and before her marriage to his brother, Henry VIII, in 1509. The house was demolished in 1811 and its replacement Aragon House still stands today.

At the end of the 19th century, drainage work on the New Kings Road caused Parsons Green Pond to dry up. Though mainly used by local farmers to water their cattle and horses, it had also been used for total immersion baptisms.

The Rector's house on Parsons Green was eventually demolished in 1882. Two years later St Dionis Church was built on its site – in what was then known as Rectory Road – with funds from the sale of St Dionis Backchurch in the City of London. When this church was demolished its pulpit, font and alter were transferred to Fulham.

Rectory Road became St Dionis Road in 1888. Since first recorded it has had no less than four different names – 'Rectory Road', 'Rectory Lane' and until early Victorian times 'Muddy Lane' when it was a route for local farmers and its only building was a wooden hut.

Large scale development came to the area after the opening of Parsons Green Underground station in the spring of 1880 – and the area's farmland and market gardens were sold off to make way for new homes.

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