

EMMER GREEN



Junction of Kidmore End and Peppard Roads, circa 1910

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Emmer Green (or 'Emmir Green' as it appears on early maps)- the name could have originated from an old Saxon word '*Eamere*' meaning 'a lake beside a stream'. The lake, now no larger than a pond, is still there; the stream might be the Swilley which used to run down from Emmer Green pond to Caversham alongside Rotherfield Way. Another theory suggests the name derives from a type of wheat which originated in Egypt, and was brought over by the Celts.

Emmer Green lies near the southern tip of the Chiltern Hills, a couple of miles north of the River Thames at Reading. Until the late 1930s it was a village on its own, geographically separate from Caversham, but still under its jurisdiction. Indications are that it developed as an estate hamlet dependent upon Caversham Park. It had a main pond, and some relatively old buildings, but no ancient church and no main central cluster of buildings before the mid 1800s. Much development has taken place since the Second World War, but it is still possible to locate many of the original dwellings and trace their history. An interesting by-product from on-going excavations (prior to building), has been the unearthing of prehistoric relics, and implements. A garden near Old Grove House yielded coins dating from Roman times up to the 4th century, and early Bronze Age pottery. There were signs of a Celtic-Romano British settlement for up to 400 people. Bronze Age pits were also discovered when the houses nearby were being built. On the west side of Cucumber Wood (Reading Golf Course) are the possible remains of a Celtic ditch and dyke fortification.

The original village may have lost its identity in the relentless urbanisation, but with that has come convenience which so many take for granted. There are a thriving parish church, two primary schools, a secondary school, health care facilities, a comprehensive range of shops, and an array of eating establishments. Many local groups and organisations cater for young and old by offering a range of leisure and sporting activities.