

Directions



1 From the far (south) end of the car park take track to left of the information boards, passing the barrier. Follow track through section of scrub and bushes onto nature reserve. After approx. 200m you will note a series of mounds running to the right of the path. These are WW1 (also used in WW2) firing points.

2 Take grassy path to the right, running along the back of the third mound. Keeping this firing point on your left, follow path to reach Bokerley Ditch (Dyke).

3 Go around gate in the Ditch ahead, through fence line and turn immediately left. Follow the field edge, with fence and Bokerley Ditch on left. Continue along this path passing red and white gas pipeline marker on your left to reach a gap and marker post in the fence line on the left.

4 With the gap/post to your left turn right and along narrow path straight across field. Keep on path to a junction of paths at far side of field. Staying within same field, turn left and walk along edge of field, with the hedge line on your right, to a gate.

5 Through gate, ignore paths left and right and continue straight ahead along hedged footpath (which can be muddy) to reach small lane with farm to your left. Stay straight ahead along the lane, passing through village of Pentridge. It is worth a short detour to view the pretty village church signposted to the right. Continue along village lane passing farm buildings, stay on the lane straight ahead as the lane becomes more of a track. Ignore gates and openings and stay on the track until it bends right.

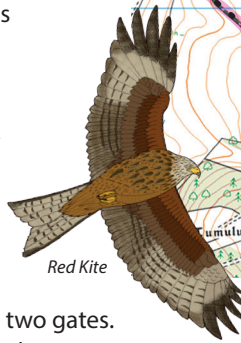
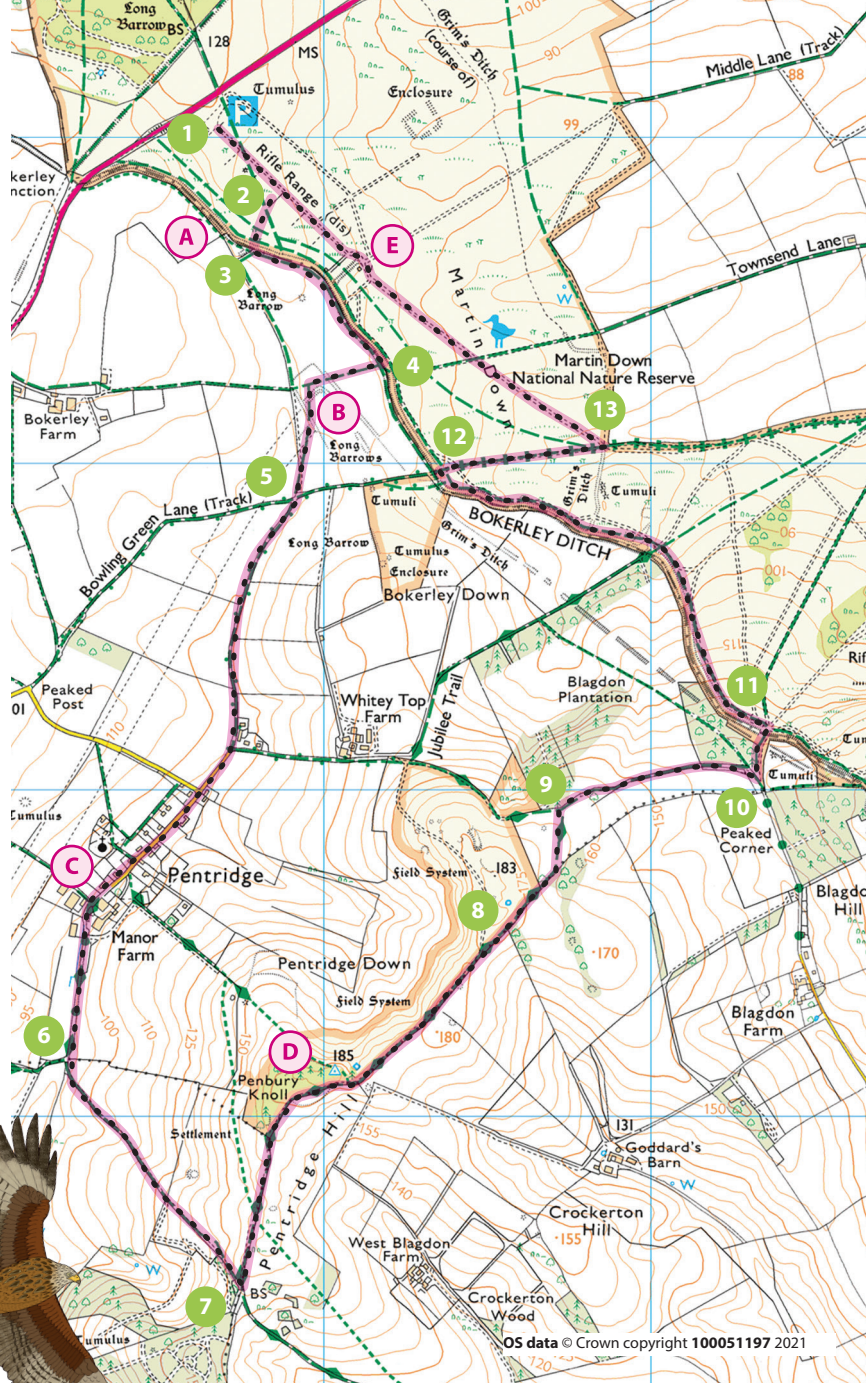
6 Where track bends right continue straight ahead, through the centre of three gates. The track, heading gently uphill, soon divides, take left-hand track heading up the hill. Follow this track with open fields to your left and fence line to your right, passing through a gate(way) near the top.

7 Track becomes grassy and less distinct reaching two gates. Do not go through the gates but turn left, almost back on yourself, and follow grassy, undulating path, passing a small communications mast (left), through gate onto Penbury Knoll. Stay straight ahead keeping fence to your right, watch out for fallen tree which makes a great resting point. Note: There are stunning views on all sides so do take the time to explore Penbury Knoll and enjoy these. Continue straight ahead, fence line on your right, following a grassy track along the top of the downs.

8 Where the grassy track divides take right-hand fork to a gate in fence (marked Jubilee Trail). Follow path through gate, straight across field to a T-junction with fingerpost.

9 Turn right and follow the footpath keeping field to your right. Where the track appears to divide keep left, moving away from field but keeping fence line on your left, follow this path until it emerges into woodland. This section can be muddy.

10 At gate turn right onto a wider track passing another gate. Turn left after this gate, onto a narrow path with woodland on your left and tumuli dotted horse paddocks to your right, follow this path down onto Martin Down.



Red Kite

11 Where chalky path divides take left-hand fork, the track becomes grassy and winding, following the line of Bokerley Ditch to your left. Continue downhill, to reach a crossroads.

12 At the crossroads take the grassy track to the right, until you reach a junction.

13 Turn left at the junction and follow this path back towards the stop butt and on to the car park, passing the rifle range on your left.

Common Blue



There are numerous routes and paths across Martin Down, we have suggested the most direct route back to the car park, but do meander and enjoy the views, flora and fauna. Please follow local signage to protect ground nesting birds or other livestock at certain times of year.



Burnt Tip Orchid

From 'cowslip time' onwards the rich flora includes twelve species of orchid, and delightful swathes of purple scabious, knapweed and heather, blue harebells, yellow vetches, hawkbits and many more, attracting a wide variety of butterfly species.



Early purple Orchid



Martin Down
National Nature Reserve
(managed by Natural England and Hampshire County Council) is an area of 342 hectares of uninterrupted chalk grassland, one of the largest in the country.

A pretty walk with one long gradual climb up to Penbury Knoll, with its hill fort and 360° views. Explore Martin Down with its wonderful variety of wildflowers, birds and insects.



With thanks to **Mark Nurse** for recommending this route.

Start Point: OS Explorer 118: Shaftesbury & Cranborne Chase - SU037201


W3W: records.necklaces.overruns

Parking: Martin Down Car Park, on A354 (Blandford-Salisbury Road).

Terrain: Grassy paths, quiet country lanes and dirt tracks.

Length: Approximately 6.6 miles (10.6 km)

Approximate time: 3 hours

 **Dogs:** On leads (livestock & ground nesting birds).

Good to know: Please do not leave valuables on display in your car and do not leave cars in the car park overnight.

Refreshments: None on route, so take a flask or even a picnic.

The information is only intended as a general guide. Please check local arrangements.

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#chaseandchalke #cranbornechaseaonb

Created by the Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership Scheme
cranbornechase.org.uk



Respect everyone
Protect the environment
Enjoy the outdoors
Follow advice and local signs



Illustrations by Sal Meedings



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Points of Interest on this route (see map overleaf for locations)

- (A) Bokerley Dyke/Ditch.** Thought to have originated in the Bronze Age or Early Iron Age as an important political and cultural boundary Bokerley Dyke/Ditch stretches for almost 6km. Used later, in the Iron Age and Roman period as a defensive structure, the dyke still forms part of the county boundary between Dorset and Hampshire.
- (B) Dorset Cursus.** One end of the 90m wide, 10km long Dorset Cursus, the longest cursus or linear ritual monument in the country. No longer visible at this point, its precise purpose, likely ceremonial, remains a mystery.
- (C) Pentridge.** Pentridge is derived from pen (hill in Celtic) and twrch (boar), so translates to 'hill of the wild boar'. In the pretty churchyard rests Roland 'Bee Beaumont a hero of WWII and the first Britton to fly superpersonally as a test pilot of the TSR2 super-sonic bomber.

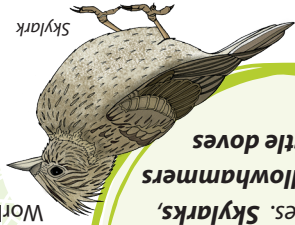


Download the 'Cranborne Chase Augmented Reality app and explore Cranborne Chase's ancient landscape.



Time Travellers

The grassland, heath and scrub of Martin Down provides habitats for spectacular wild flowers, birds, reptiles and invertebrates. *Skylarks, cuckoos, yellowhammers and turtle doves*



now makes a terrific observation point. An earlier, smaller range may have existed in a similar spot, probably for First World War training.

(E) Rifle Ranges. The huge earthwork of the rifle range was created by the Royal Engineers for training in 1939. It was used by the Home Guard for rifle and small arms target shooting and later by Canadian/American soldiers in the lead up to D-Day. Used up to 1954, you can still see the 'stop' the largest mound which

(D) Penbury Knoll. Elevation: 185m (74m above the surrounding landscape) The highest part of Pentridge Hill is a local landmark called Penbury Knoll, a scheduled monument, one of fewer than 20 Neolithic hillforts in England (mainly in the South-West), dated in the range 3500-2000BC.