



The route crosses the **Rushmore Estate**, once the home of **General Pitt Rivers**, known for his archaeological digs and collection of artefacts, now in the **Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford**



Dog Violet

## Directions

**1** From Handley Crossroads follow the High Street (be aware of traffic) to the church at the top.

**2** Go through the lych gate up the church path (stop to meet Isaac Gulliver on the **Cranborne Chase AR app**, see overleaf), continue around the church and out through the back gate, head straight across track and follow path keeping hedge line on your right.

**3** Go through the gateway at the end of the field, turn left. Through next gateway turn right diagonally down the field, through the hedge and continue to the road.

**4** Turn left along the road to the next entrance on the left. Turn up Deanland (pronounced Den-land) Drove towards Handley Common.

**5** Arriving at a T-junction turn right, past Hunt Corner and Snowpuddle Farms on into Chase Woods.



**6** At the first crossroads, turn right to see an example of coppicing, or to continue on the walk turn left on to the **Shire Rack**. Stay on the **Shire Rack** crossing Bridmore Ride and Oxford Street and walk along the edge of the golf course.

**7** At the crossroads, by the cottage, take the bridleway left across the golf course (be aware of golfers), through a gate onto Woodcutts Common. Stop at the remains of the British Romano settlement and use the **Cranborne Chase AR** to watch it come to life (see overleaf).

**8** Continue along the path across Woodcutts Common towards the B3081, following the path off the Common onto a track between two fields. At a crossroad of paths turn left (slightly back on yourself) to go into the woods. Continue straight ahead crossing Oxford Street and Bridmore Ride until you reach a stile leading on to Handley Common.

**9** Go over stile, turn right and head down the treeline. Cross the B3081 (please take care here) and go down the entrance to the small holding opposite.

**10** At the end of the entrance track on your right you will find the bridleway. Continue through the wooded area.

**11** When you come to an opening take the path on the left, turning right once through the gate.

**12** Stay on this path to reach another gate, go through and turn immediately left, at a crossroads. Follow the path until it opens out into a track, this leads back to the village. Follow the road back up to the church and then down the High Street to the start.

In September, **Chase Woods** would have been harvested for hazelnuts that were sent to London markets and mushrooms to make mushroom ketchup



Woodcutts Settlement

## Points of interest on this route (see map overlay for locations)

**A** The name **Sixpenny Handley** (sometimes written 6d Handley) is derived from two medieval hundreds "Sexpena" (Saxon hilltop) and "Hanlega" (high clearing), which by the 14th century were united as the hundred of "Sexpenne et Henle";

**B** **Great Fire of Handley** – On 20 May 1892, the village suffered a major fire which resulted in most of it having to be rebuilt after nearly 200 people were left homeless. So much clothing was donated by well-wishers that it was said a man from Handley could be identified as such because he wore 2, or even 3, waistcoats! Look out for the inscription "Handley Burnt 1892" on a building on the left as you walk up the High Street, this was the bakery until the 1980s.

**C** Notorious **Dorset Smuggler Isaac Gulliver** married innkeeper William Beale's daughter Betty at Sixpenny Handley church on 5 October 1768. Sixpenny Handley is around 30 miles inland, a long way to travel loaded with spirits and lace under the cover of darkness, so Gulliver may well have had another enterprise founded on the availability of deer on the Chase – and a tomb adjoining the local church where 'hot venison could be stored!

**D** **Handley Common** was common land used by the villagers until WWII when it was used by American troops to ready for D-Day. 1953-59 the extinguishment of commoner's rights was granted, there was much displeasure locally and the land was given to the council who placed the starter farms on it that you see today.



Download the 'Cranborne Chase Augmented Reality app and see Isaac Gulliver at Sixpenny Handley Church and Woodcutts British Romano settlement

**Time Travellers**

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Cranborne Chase AR app to find out more!

**G** **Woodcutts British Romano settlement** – download the Cranborne Chase AR app to find out more!

**F** **Shire Rack** – an historic route that marks the boundary between Dorset and Wiltshire – download the Cranborne Chase Time Traveller App!

**E** **Coppicing** for hazel is the practice of cutting trees and shrubs to ground level, promoting vigorous re-growth and a sustainable supply of timber for hurdles, stays for thatching and charcoal. Coppicing is also good for wildlife allowing more light and heat to reach the floor allowing flowers such as bluebells, wood anemone, dog violets and St John's Wort to establish, aiding butterflies and other pollinators.

The village of **Sixpenny Handley** was originally known as 'Handley, or Handley St Mary', the use of the current name is fairly modern

Explore the historic village of Sixpenny Handley and surrounding countryside including the British Romano settlement at Woodcutts and the Shire Rack, an ancient county boundary that still marks the border between Dorset and Wiltshire.

With thanks to **1st Woodcutts Cubs** for creating and sharing this route.

**Start Point:** Handley Crossroads, OS Explorer 118 - SU 0000 1705, W3W: drilling.strongman.chainsaw

**Parking:** On village streets, please park safely and considerately.

**Terrain:** Roads, lanes, woodland and field tracks and bridleways. Some short steep sections.

**Length:** Approximately 7.4 miles /11.9 km

**Approximate time:** 3.5 hours

**Dogs:** On leads - livestock, ground nesting birds, roads and golf course.

**Good to know:** Look out for woodland flowers and butterflies in spring and summer.

**Refreshments:** No pubs on route, shop in village and café at Rushmore Golf Course (serving light lunches) open to non members.

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

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Created by the Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership Scheme  
[cranbornechase.org.uk](http://cranbornechase.org.uk)



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



Illustrations by Sal Meedings



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**Sixpenny Handley & Woodcutts**  
Explore the area's rich history.

