

**St. Mary's Church:** listed in the Domesday Book in 1086, the church was updated by the Normans around 1150 with further additions around 1230 to 1330. The exterior has changed little since the 16th century. Internal renovations took place in 1840. The churchyard contains a memorial to the last man to be killed in a duel in England, John Alexander Seton.

**Alderholt Mill.** There has been a mill here since the 14th century. Until 1947 it was worked commercially, after which it fell into disuse before being restored and made able to produce flour again in 1987. The mill still has a working water wheel which uses the power of the river to grind wheat, from which wholemeal flour is made that can be purchased at the mill and from other local outlets. A self-catering flat at the mill is available for weekly rental from May until November.



St James' Church



Watermeadow at Ashford Water

**St. James' Church:** A Grade 2 listed building, described in the book 'The Buildings of England, Dorset' by John Newman and Nikolaus Pevsner as "a very simple and unusual church";

**The Allen River,** joined by **Ashford Water** just to the east of Alderholt Mill, is a chalk stream which has its source between the villages of Martin and Tidpit within the Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and runs in a south-westerly direction for about 13 miles to meet the River Avon at Fordingbridge. Although much of the crystal clear water is quite shallow, it also has numerous deep pools that make it a habitat for trout. Coarse fishing is available at Alderholt Mill from June to March.

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

Part Two of a circular walk between the town of Fordingbridge and the village of Alderholt, this walk follows field paths to and through the broad valley of the Allen River.

**Start:** St. James's Church, Daggons Road, Alderholt | OS OL 22 | SU104126 | W3W: pins.jammy.owls

**Finish:** St. Mary's Church in Fordingbridge | OS OL 22 | SU145138 | W3W: sheepish.pavilions.hazel

**Parking:** There is a small car park next to St. James' Church, but please be aware that visitors to the church have priority over other users.

**Terrain:** Field paths and tracks with gates and stiles. One short and steep climb. Along Station Road and Blackwater Grove in Alderholt, the roadside footway is used.

**Length:** Approximately 4.84 miles / 7.75 km.

**Approximate time:** 3 hours.

**Dogs:** Please keep dogs on a lead wherever livestock are present.

**Good to know:** Public toilets in the central car park in Fordingbridge.

**Refreshments:** Fordingbridge and Alderholt offer a good variety of cafes, restaurants, pubs and shops.

Cream Teas are served at Alderholt Mill on weekend afternoons in the summer. See [www.alderholtmill.co.uk](http://www.alderholtmill.co.uk) for more information.

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



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

Share your pictures with us at [#cranbornechase](https://www.cranbornechase.org.uk)



[cranbornechase.org.uk](https://www.cranbornechase.org.uk)



Cranborne Chase National Landscape

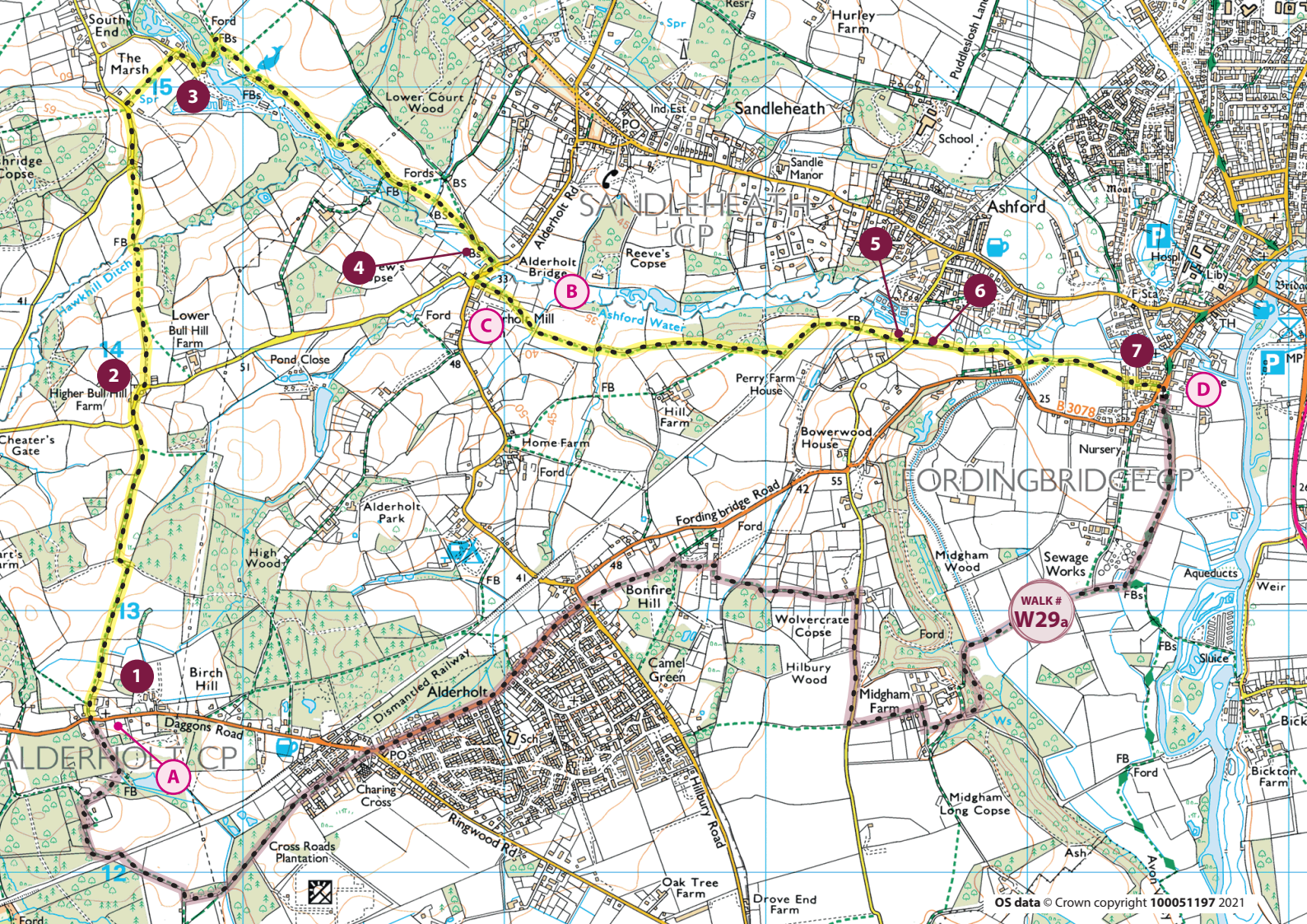


**Alderholt to Fordingbridge**  
The return leg of a circular walk from Fordingbridge

WALK #  
**W29b**







## Directions

- 1 Take the signposted footpath to the left of St. James's Church, keeping to the edge of the fields with the hedge on your right. A gate and stile lead onto a track between trees and fields which continues until it reaches a road. Follow the road uphill and as it turns to the right at Higher Bull Hill Farm, take the signposted footpath on the left to a gate and stile into fields.
- 2 Continue with the hedge on your left to a stile and footbridge then through another field to reach a road. Continue ahead along the road to a signposted footpath on the right, and across to the field to pass between houses to another road. Turn right along the road until you see a footpath sign and gate on your left.
- 3 Take this footpath through the wood and over the stream then turn right along the edge of the fields until the path enters woodland and follows the picturesque chalk stream valley of the Allen River. Follow the path through woods, keeping straight ahead where there is another path signposted to the right which crosses the river. On reaching a gate into a field, turn right through the gate (do not go straight across the field) and continue over stiles to another gate into woodland. Stay on this path it reaches a road. Turn right and cross the bridge at Alderholt Mill.
- 4 Just past the car park for the Mill a signposted narrow footpath on the left leads between fences and over stiles, giving attractive views towards Ashford Water to the left. Follow the waymarked path over stiles across the fields to cross a footbridge over the river.

- 5 Continue along the path through fields, over a series of stiles and then over a raised wooden walkway across a stream, then continue along the waymarked path to reach and cross a narrow road.
- 6 The path runs between fences to pass allotments on the left and continues between fields, then briefly alongside the river before continuing between fields to reach Fordingbridge. The tower of St. Mary's Church can be seen ahead.
- 7 Pass between houses to cross a residential road to another footpath between houses and follow this path to reach the road and the end of this walk, opposite St. Mary's church in Fordingbridge.

St Mary's Church

