

## Start/Finish:

This is a circular route and can be started at any stage of the trail.

## Distance:

3.5 miles

## Duration:

2 hours

## Alternative route



Follow the Basingstoke Canal towpath.

WOTW = War of the Worlds



### Martian



Horsell Village

### The Wheatsheaf



### Subway



### Peace Garden



### H.G. Wells



Wheatsheaf Bridge (Horsell Bridge in WOTW)

### Wells' House



### Town Gate



Towpath

Basingstoke Canal

Town Centre

Woking Railway Station

Bus Station

Shah Jahan Mosque

Narrator's House

### Chertsey Road



# The Wells in Woking Heritage Trail



## 1 Woking Railway Station to Wells' house

Exit the station via Platform 1 (the town side). Turn right onto Broadway, walk past the bus station, and continue straight ahead. As the road starts to curve left (on to Stanley Road), continue straight ahead on to Maybury Road. The railway line will be on your right. Continue to the end of the road, which will take you passed Wells' former home, 141 Maybury Road.

### Wells' House

Called 'Lynton', this is the house Wells, aged 28, rented with his partner Jane, who he would make his second wife during his stay.

## 2 Monument Bridge

At the end of Maybury Road, turn left onto Monument Road. Walk over the Basingstoke Canal via Monument Bridge (Ottershaw Bridge in WOTW). Cross over the road, walk a short distance through the woods to Woking's Muslim Burial Ground Peace Garden, which was restored in 2015.

### Peace Garden

Wells wrote extensively about war. The burial ground was established by the War Office to ensure Muslim soldiers defending Britain in the First and Second World Wars could be buried according to their religious rights.

## 3 All Saints Church

Leaving the Peace Garden, stick to the main footpath and continue through the common in the direction of the Six Crossroads roundabout. You will emerge on

Woodham Lane (A245) (by a large road sign). Take care crossing the road and continue on the woodland path that leads round the back of All Saints Church.

## 4 Sands at Bleak House

You will arrive in the car park for Sands at Bleak House. In *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*, a widely praised graphic novel by Alan Moore and Kevin O'Neill, Dr Henry Jekyll and Edward Hyde stayed overnight at Bleak House Inn when investigating the Martian invasion.

## 5 Sandy Track

Take care crossing Chertsey Road (A320) and join the path next to the telephone box. Continue ahead until you arrive at a wide sandy track. Turn left and make your way to the Sandpits, located on your left side.

### Sandpits

The large sandpit, referred to locally as 'The Beach', is often depicted as the Martians' landing site because it is easy to imagine that the pond occupies the crater-like dent made by the first cylinder from Mars. Further along the track, partially hidden by trees, is an older sandpit, closer to the site where Ogilvy discovered the Martian cylinder.

## 6 To Six Crossroads car park

With the large sandy beach in front of you, either walk round the left of it following the wide footpath, or cut diagonally across the sandpit, to make your way to the Six Crossroads car park.

## 7 Woodham Road

Exiting the car park take care crossing Shores Road (A245) and pick up the footpath, which cuts across to Woodham Road. In 1895 this area would have been nurseries, farmland and orchards. Cross the road and follow the footpath to Carlton Road. Turn left along Carlton Road and continue straight until you reach Chertsey Road (A320).

## 8 Pinewood Close

Turn right onto Chertsey Road and walk along the A320 until you reach Pinewood Close. At the entrance of Pinewood Close, next to the telegraph pole, pick up the footpath that leads you onto Woodham Rise.

## 9 Wheatsheaf Common

Cross the road and continue along the footpath through Wheatsheaf Common, keeping to the right, until you reach Wheatsheaf Recreational Ground. At the far end of the recreation ground, across the road, you will see The Wheatsheaf public house.

### The Wheatsheaf

Formerly called The Wheatsheaf Inn this is the public house near Horsell Bridge where Ogilvy encountered a potman when rushing to Woking with news of the Martians.

## 10 Horsell Bridge

With The Wheatsheaf in front of you, turn left onto Chobham Road (A3046) and cross over the Basingstoke Canal using Horsell Bridge. The Lightbox Museum and Gallery on the junction of Victoria

Way has a local heritage collection, café, toilets and is free to enter, (closed Mondays).

### Subway

The mural in the subway depicts the Martians landing on Horsell Common and the destruction of Woking by the tripods. The mural also features local landmarks including the Shah Jahan Mosque and Maybury Arch.

## 11 Cross Victoria Way

Cross the Victoria Way dual carriageway, either by subway or using the road crossing, to make your way into the Town Centre. Upon reaching Christchurch Way/ Church Street you arrive at the proposed site of a commemorative sculpture of H.G. Wells.

## 12 The Martian

Follow the road ahead and an imposing Martian tripod should come into view. Walk towards "the walking engine of glittering metal", located centrally in Crown Square, less than a mile from where Wells lived.

### Martian

The tripod is seven metres tall. Nearby a cylindrical pod, resembling those in which the Martians arrived, can be seen ploughing into the ground. Patterns in the paving represent the shock waves resulting from the pod's landing. Also set in the pavement is the bacteria responsible for eventually destroying the invaders. One stone, under the tripod's leg shows the bacteria creeping upwards to destroy the seemingly invincible invader.

## H.G. Wells

On the 21 September 2016, H.G. Wells' 150th birthday, a bronze sculpture of the author is set to be unveiled. Called the Novelist and Thinker, the sculpture is designed by local artist Wesley Harland.

## Town Gate

Located between Christchurch and Barclays Bank, the Town Gate, designed by Alan Dawson, outlines key elements in Woking's history: the Basingstoke Canal, the railway, Scots pine trees and brickmaking. The Wellsian link is represented through a silhouette of a Martian fighting machine.

## 13 Celebrating Woking's Wellsian heritage

Run away from the Martian tripod in the direction of O'Neills and continue straight, which will bring you to Chertsey Road, where you will find a concentration of bars and restaurants. Woking's Wellsian heritage has inspired a number of local businesses to use references to his work in building their brands.

## Chertsey Road

Wetherspoons' pub, The Herbert George Wells, houses an Invisible Man sculpture and a time machine on the ceiling. An interesting collection of historical photographs of Woking is displayed around the venue.

A couple of doors along, the Ogilvy celebrates the astronomer who discovered the Martian cylinder.

From here you can make your way back to **Woking Railway Station**.