



Learn more about the Solar System and the Universe -

Visit our Planetarium and Observatory in the Wynyard Woodland Park.

The Planetarium is used by schools, colleges, the OU, adult education and community groups during week days and some evenings. However, it is possible to book a large enough group of individuals for a show at a time of their choosing, Pstase contact the director on 01740 630544.

Public shows are on every 1st & 3rd Friday evening of the month at 7:30p.m. and last for just over an hour.

The Observatory is open to members of the public on clear Friday nights from September throughout the winter months until the end of April, manned by members of the local astronomical society.

A Telescope Club operates every last Friday in the month at 7.30pm. New telescope owners and potential telescope owners are welcome

Contact details :-

For details of public shows taking place at Wynyard Planetarium, contact the Planetarium Director on (01740) 630544,

or e-mail [director@wynyard-planetarium.net](mailto:director@wynyard-planetarium.net).

Visit the Planetarium website at [www.wynyard-planetarium.net](http://www.wynyard-planetarium.net)

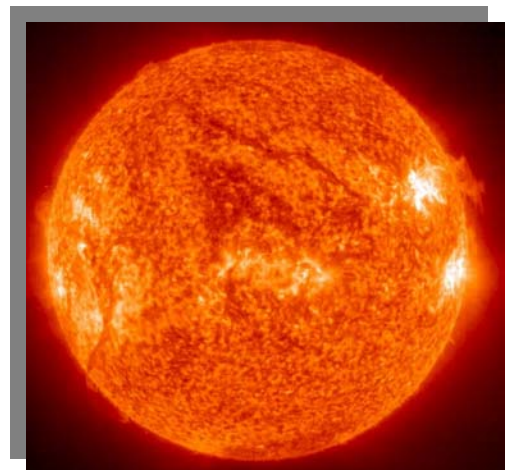


## Wynyard Woodland Park

### The Solar Walk

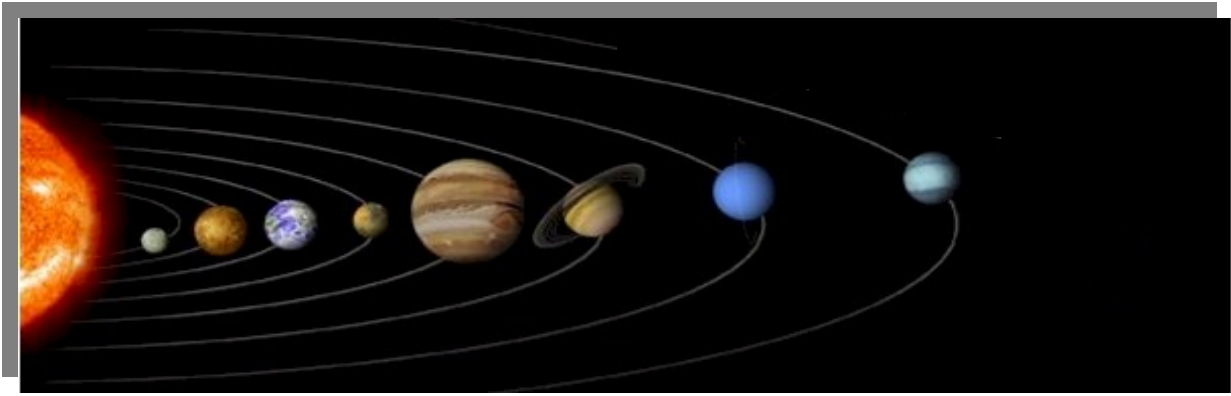
The Park has installed a Solar Walk for the use of school parties and interested Public as part of the Planetarium and Observatory activities

Our walk starts at the Visitor Centre with the Sun and completes with planet Pluto at the second entrance to Thorpe Wood – a distance of 745 metres. Each information post is set at the correct scale distance for the Solar system bodies. You will notice the first five planets are within one hundred metres of the Sun with the remaining four planets a considerable distance away from the Sun, providing an indication of the massive scale of the Solar System.



Our Solar System is made up of eight planets and their moons (Pluto was recently demoted to a dwarf planet), thousands of asteroids, comets and dust particles that orbit the Sun.

Stars, like our Sun, generate their own light while planetary bodies shine by reflecting starlight. The word "planet" comes from the Greek word for "wanderer." All of the planets travel around the Sun in the same counter-clockwise direction. The planets all rotate, or turn on their axes, as they travel around the Sun.



## The Solar System

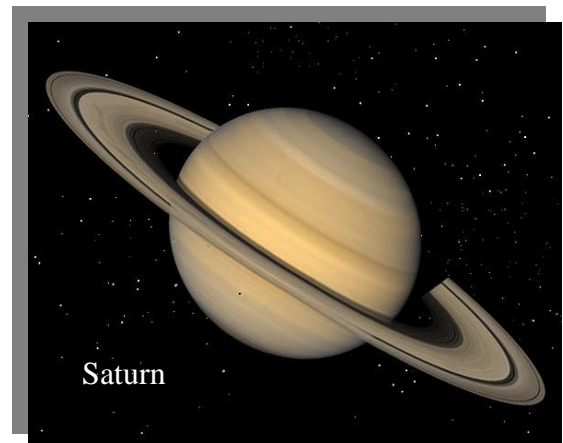
The above image shows the bodies of the Solar System in their visual colours. However, it does not correctly show their relative distances from each other or their sizes compared to each other.

On the scale of our Solar Walk for every metre you walk you would have to walk approximately 8 million kilometres in space.



The 18.5 metres you walk from the Sun signpost to the Earth signpost is an actual distance in space of approximately 150 million kilometres. From the Sun signpost to the dwarf-planet Pluto signpost is a walking distance of 745 metres or an actual distance in space of nearly 6 billion kilometres. If we put the nearest star, Proxima Centauri, on our Solar Walk we would have to extend the Walk over 5,000 kilometres to New York or Baghdad.

Equally, if the diameter of the Sun is sized at the same scale as the distances on the Solar Walk it would be approximately the size of a small football whereas the Earth would be the size of a pinhead, Jupiter the largest planet, would be the size of a ping pong ball and Pluto would be the size of a speck of pollen.



There are a number of Solar Walks around the UK and the world. Some, like ours, are only a hundred or so metres long, others can be hundreds of miles long. Some are simple arrangements with basic printed sheets of text and graphics fixed to posts, others are wonderful sculptures or attractive structures with elegant engraved or embossed metal plates carrying the information.

When on your travels it is certainly worthwhile checking the area for a nearby Solar Walk.