



EMBARGOED 00:00:01 Monday 8th JANUARY 2018

WICKER MAN ANNOUNCED AS LATEST GROUND-BREAKING ROLLERCOASTER EXPERIENCE FROM ALTON TOWERS RESORT

Following years in development, work is nearly complete on the globally unique rollercoaster experience fusing wood and fire – due to open in
Spring 2018

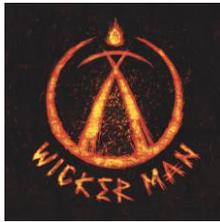
- *Wicker Man* is the world's first rollercoaster experience fusing wood and fire - incorporating a giant, flaming *Wicker Man* who stands six-stories high
- Wooden track will race through the flaming structure of the *Wicker Man* three times
- *Wicker Man* is the UK's first new wooden rollercoaster experience in 21 years, reconnecting riders with the primal essence of rollercoasters

8th JANUARY 2018: Alton Towers Resort has announced its latest ground-breaking thrill attraction set to open in Spring 2018 – *Wicker Man*.

Wicker Man is the UK's first new wooden rollercoaster experience in 21 years and comes with a globally unique twist – bringing together wood and fire for the very first time. A *Wicker Man* structure standing at 57.57ft (17.55m) tall – the height of a six-storey building – will dominate the very centre of Alton Towers Resort, appearing to burst into flames as the wooden track races three separate times through the structure.

The project, previously known as 'SW8', is the latest in a series of mould-breaking ride launches from the Staffordshire theme park that have helped define the industry. A world-class team of experts continue to work on the new attraction, led by Great Coasters International, the world's leading creators of wooden rollercoasters. The safety of guests has been paramount in the design and build of *Wicker Man*, incorporating the latest in proven safety technology, rigorous testing and hundreds of training hours for ride operators.

Bradley Wynne, Creative Lead at Alton Towers Resort commented:



“We are delighted to finally be announcing Wicker Man as the latest ground-breaking thrill attraction from Alton Towers Resort for 2018. Guests will be ‘chosen’ to take part in a celebratory ‘rite of passage’ as they race through the flaming Wicker Man.

“We hope visitors will be blown away by Wicker Man’s breath-taking scale whilst the primal essence of the wooden coaster and astonishing effects will leave them delighted, exhilarated and eager to ride again.”

Visitors to Alton Towers Resort in 2018 will embark on a multi-sensory rite of passage, in which they’ll be drawn into the mysterious world of The Beornen, a shadowy group living in the woods surrounding the theme park.

The first publicity pictures hinting at the nature of the forthcoming attraction include artwork created by globally-celebrated illustrator Kyle Lambert – known across the world as the artist behind the imagery for award-winning show *Stranger Things*, alongside other Hollywood movie work including *Jurassic Park*, *Super 8* and *Jumanji*.

Andy Hine MBE, Chairman of the Roller Coaster Club of Great Britain commented on the announcement saying:

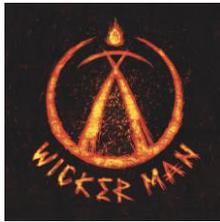
“We’ve been hoping that Alton Towers would invest in a wooden coaster for a long time, and we’re so pleased it’s finally coming with Wicker Man. GCI are known for building really exciting, smooth coasters, and this will be a great complement to the ‘Big Six’ steel rides already at the park. It’s a big investment which is great for thrill-seekers everywhere, and I for one can’t wait to ride it.”

And new for 2018, guests can purchase their Alton Towers 2018 Season Pass for just £55 by visiting altontowers.com meaning customers can pay for a day, and come back all year. (Exclusions apply. Full terms and conditions can be found online.)

Keep up to date on the latest *Wicker Man* details by visiting altontowers.com/wickerman or searching #WickerManRide across social media.

Key Information

- *Wicker Man* is the latest ground-breaking rollercoaster experience from Alton Towers Resort
- The world’s first rollercoaster experience fusing wood and fire
- Due to launch at the Staffordshire theme park in Spring 2018
- The UK’s first new wooden coaster experience in 21 years, reconnecting riders with the primal essence of rollercoasters



- Riders must be at least 1.2m tall, the track is 2,028 ft. (618m) long
- Giant, flaming *Wicker Man* structure stands at six-storeys high (57.57ft / 17.55m)
- *Wicker Man* has been in development for more than four years
- World-class team constructing the ride lead by Great Coasters International, the world's leading creators of wooden rollercoasters
- Alton Towers Resort has invested £16m into the creation of *Wicker Man*
- Launched with teaser artwork created by world-famous illustrator Kyle Lambert
- The latest in proven safety technology has been used, and rigorous testing is now taking place before launch
- Ride operating team will undertake over 100 hours of training each between now and the opening of *Wicker Man* so guests know that they are in safe hands and can ride in complete confidence
- By launch, more than 1,000 people will have worked on the unique project, the majority coming from the local area

DOWNLOAD IMAGES HERE: <http://bit.ly/2IUMFtJ>

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Notes to editors

For more information, to request additional images or to discuss upcoming features please contact:

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About Alton Towers Resort

Home to the UK's favourite theme park, the Alton Towers Resort offers an amazing combination of rides, attractions, shows & themed accommodation offering fantastical escapism for thrill-seekers, families and kids of all ages. Set in over 500 acres of beautiful Staffordshire countryside, the Alton Towers Resort offers three fantastically themed hotels, an Enchanted Village, wacky waterpark, luxury spa, extraordinary golf, Tree Top Quest, Rollercoaster Restaurant and of course, not forgetting over 50 world class rides and attractions!

*Previously codenamed Secret Weapon 8, *Wicker Man* is the latest world class experience to come from Alton Towers Resort's Secret Weapon Programme. Joining a line-up of ground breaking attractions including Oblivion the world's first vertical drop rollercoaster and Nemesis Europe's first inverted rollercoaster.

To find out more visit www.alton-towers.com.

Alton Towers Resort is part of Merlin Entertainments – www.merlinentertainments.biz