

Happy Valley Management Plan

2017-2021

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INTRODUCTION

Happy Valley is located in Orkney's west mainland (Grid reference HY327106), approximately 2.5km from the village of Stenness. Accessed from the Bigswell Road, it comprises a single-storey house named Bankburn and an area of garden which has been created along the Burn of Russadale to the south, as well as four enclosed fields. The house, its garden structures and walls are Grade C listed. The previous tenant, Mr Edwin Harrold, planted many trees, shrubs and flowers around the house and alongside the burn; over time these grew and developed into a woodland garden. Edwin began to welcome visitors, both local people and tourists, to share in enjoying the special place he had created. This continued for many years, until, aged over 90, he had to move into care.

While Edwin lived at Happy Valley, the property was owned by Professor William Isbister. Following Edwin's death in 2005, Professor Isbister gifted the house and land to Orkney Islands Council, so that it could continue to be enjoyed by the public. Now owned and managed by Orkney Islands Council, Happy Valley continues to be promoted for public access. A local group, the Friends of Happy Valley (FHV), came together in 2005 and its members have been involved in the upkeep of the property ever since. The group is important in terms of discussing maintenance that is needed, arranging work parties and reporting any problems. FHV is now a registered charitable organisation (SCO44724), raising funds for its charitable objectives, thus adding to an already beneficial partnership.

Happy Valley is unique locally - a special place where people come to appreciate, understand and value aspects of Orkney's natural and cultural heritage. Its peacefulness and tranquillity offer opportunities for quiet reflection and enjoyment of the natural environment. Most of the trees in the original woodland are not native to Orkney; however the shelter they provide has created a damp microclimate and shaded conditions that favour a diverse range of species, in particular invertebrates, mosses and bryophytes. Since 2006 approximately 1000 new young trees have been planted in the adjacent field and these include Downy Birch, Rowan, Tea-leaved Willow and Aspen of Orkney native provenance, Common Alder, Larch, Sycamore, Bird Cherry, Lime, Holm Oak, Sweet Chestnut, Horse Chestnut, Sessile Oak, Western Hemlock, Beech and Copper Beech. Other habitats on the site include the freshwater Burn of Russadale, various stone walls, shaded earth banks, a small area of heathland, some semi-improved grassland and a pond.

Wildflower plots were established in one of the fields in 2008, using locally sourced seed. Species sown include red clover, water avens, common knapweed, bush vetch, meadow vetchling, devil's bit scabious, cat's ear and selfheal. This area now provides seed for biodiversity enhancement projects throughout Orkney, to increase habitat for pollinating insects, in particular the nationally scarce great yellow bumblebee, *Bombus distinguendus*. Creation of the pond was included as an action in the Orkney LBAP 2013-2016 and it is now used regularly by the RSPB Field Officer for schools visits.

Disabled access is available to parts of the site and there may be opportunities to extend this in the future. There is no on-site interpretation; however, once renovation of the house has been completed, there is scope for it to be used to display items from Edwin's lifetime and to interpret the natural heritage interests of Happy Valley.

This five year plan sets out the measures which will be taken by the Council and FHV to manage Happy Valley. It is based on an earlier draft management plan covering the period 2013-2017 which was produced by Jenny Taylor, Landscape Architect, for the Orkney Woodland Project in 2012.

Orkney Islands Council and the Friends of Happy Valley will endeavour to maintain the welcoming, informal atmosphere of Happy Valley and will use creativity and innovation to enable its low carbon footprint to be retained and to allow people of all ages to enjoy, and be involved in, its natural and cultural heritage.

OVERALL AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES

Overall Aims and Objectives:

Enable the long-term, sustainable future of Happy Valley.
Develop Happy Valley as a Local Nature Reserve.
Enable it to remain an accessible place for members of the public to enjoy.
Ensure that the garden retains its rambling charm and informal character.
Involve local people, especially those who knew Edwin, in its management.
Enable the cultural history of Happy Valley to be recorded and enjoyed.
Develop the area as an educational resource for school pupils and adults.
Further enhance and interpret the natural history interests of the site, contributing, where appropriate, to Orkney Local Biodiversity Action Plan targets.
Provide an 'action plan' for all interested parties to discuss and develop.
Enable all parties involved to share in management discussions and activities.
Act as a tool to draw down further funding as required.

Overall Principles

Ensure that Happy Valley remains a place that people and wildlife can share.
Retain the 'magic' of the place by use of a gentle touch, respecting sensitivities surrounding Happy Valley.
Ensure value for money to avoid wastefulness, in accordance with Edwin's style.
Maintain the low carbon footprint which Edwin established.
Maintain an appropriate balance between tidiness and wildness.
Recycle and re-use materials wherever possible.

The management plan addresses each element of work in turn. The following sections include brief, updated background information, followed by an action plan which is specific to that element of the work:

Cultural Heritage	Access and Car-parking
The House and Lawn	Interpretation, Signage and Publicity
Mature Woodland and Young Trees	Educational and Recreational Use
The Burn and Hydrology	Decision Making
The Pond	Finances
Biodiversity	Monitoring and Updating
The Fields	

CULTURAL HERITAGE

Background

Even after Edwin Harrold's death, Happy Valley remains a charming place, but for many people the strength of its charm comes from the story behind it, not merely its physical presence. Edwin has left his mark all over Happy Valley - in the remnants of his wonderfully creative hydro-electric scheme, the waterfalls and structures he built and the trees he planted. More importantly, he has left many memories and stories amongst people who knew him well. People, both young and old, are enchanted to hear how he lived and how he made a difference (and how he enjoyed life). These stories are such an important part of Happy Valley and the Friends of Happy Valley (FHV) are concerned that this information will be lost, if it is not gathered together in the near future. The house, its garden structures and walls are category C listed.

To date, various efforts have been made to bring information together. A member of the FHV gathered a great collection of histories, memories, photos, songs etc. together and various other individuals have kindly allowed photos and papers to be copied. Edwin was also an artist and one of his paintings was kindly donated to OIC and various sketches have been seen. There are likely to be more around various homes in Orkney and a photographic record of these would be a wonderful addition to any display about Happy Valley.

Edwin and his gardens were visited by so many people that he kept visitors books and it would be a great addition to the history of Happy Valley if these could be located and copied and if any other items that he owned or used could also be photographed.

Professor Isbister, who gifted the property to the OIC, would also welcome the history of his ancestors and the house (formerly known as Bankburn) being recorded and available to see on the site.

During 2012, the Orkney Research Centre for Archaeology (ORCA) carried out a detailed survey of the house before it was renovated and recorded all their findings in a report, which was accompanied by photos of all parts of the building. Also in 2012, Sarah Jane Gibbon was contracted to research the history of the house and of Edwin, to carry out some oral history recording and to gather together materials for a Happy Valley archive to be housed in Orkney Library.

A Happy Valley website, recently established and funded by the FHV, is under development. There is also a collection of display material which the FHV have used at events.

Aims and Objectives

Record the history of Happy Valley and Bankburn before it became known as Happy Valley

Record the history and stories about Edwin Harrold.

Gather together photos, paintings, music and letters associated with Happy Valley.

Enable a permanent display of the heritage to be in place.

Ensure the future availability and accessibility of this information.

Principles

Act with sensitivity towards Edwin's FHV and relatives.

Action	Lead Agency	To be done by	When	Funded by
Locate further information, photos, other items etc. and add to the archive.	FHV.	FHV / all.	Ongoing.	N/A.
Prepare display material ready to be used in the house.	FHV/OIC.	FHV.	As appropriate.	To be decided.
Replace selected items in the house (currently in storage at neighbouring property) when house is in suitable condition.	FHV.	FHV.	As appropriate.	To be decided.
Design a leaflet about Happy Valley and its history.	FHV/OIC.	FHV/OIC.	Aspirational.	To be decided.
Make a film about Happy Valley	FHV/OIC.	Consultant.	Aspirational.	To be decided.

THE HOUSE AND LAWN

Background:

The renovation of the house has always been a priority with the FHV, although they also wish to see it remain similar in appearance and to be simple i.e. there is a wish to avoid installing toilets, heating or anything unsustainable, or out of keeping, rather that it should remain low impact, environmentally friendly and off-grid. Electricity was previously provided to the house by a mini hydro-electric scheme which Edwin and his FHV constructed. The remains of the sluice gates and the wheels and infrastructure are still in place. Apparently Edwin could open the sluices from within the house.

In 2013 work was undertaken to renovate the exterior of the house in a traditional manner; unfortunately problems remain due to continued water ingress and the building remains unusable as a community resource. A detailed survey of the house was carried out by the Orkney Research Centre for Archaeology (ORCA) prior to any building works commencing.

In May 2016 a further survey was undertaken by the Council's Historic Environment Officer and a report prepared which details the improvements that would be necessary to bring the building to a wind and water-tight state.

Aims and Objectives:

Ensure the house is put into a safe condition and explore options for its future use.
Use house renovation work as a training opportunity in traditional building work.
Use renewable energy and minimise the carbon footprint of the building.

Principles:

Undertake all work sensitively, to enable the house to retain its character and charm.
Maintain the house as an 'off-grid' low user of electricity.
Integrate decision making on renewable energy plans with house renovation.

Action	Lead Agency	To be done by	When	Funded by
Complete roof and external wall renovation.	OIC.	OIC.	Subject to grant funding.	OIC.
Install rainwater goods.	OIC.	OIC.		
Install French drain along rear of house.	OIC.	OIC.		
Carry out final painting and minor works to consolidated building.	OIC.	OIC.		
Discuss and explore options for how the building will be used and managed.	OIC/FHV.	OIC/FHV.	2017 – 18.	N/A.
Sort house contents currently in storage and decide which should be replaced in house, removing the remainder.	FHV.	FHV.	Ongoing.	Volunteer time.
Maintain flower beds and plants around the building and add to as necessary, avoiding invasive non-native species.	FHV.	FHV.	Ongoing.	Volunteer time.
Maintain regular mowing of lawn.	OIC.	OIC.	Ongoing.	OIC.
Discuss energy options for Happy Valley.	OIC/FHV.	OIC.	2017-18.	N/A.
Investigate options for small-scale renewable energy supply to the house.	OIC/FHV.	OIC.	Aspirational.	Subject to grant funding.
If deemed suitable for Happy Valley, source funding to install renewable energy technology.	OIC/FHV.	OIC/FHV.	Aspirational.	Subject to grant funding.
Restore hydro scheme.	FHV.	FHV.	Aspirational. Dependent on funding & consents.	Subject to grant funding.

MATURE WOODLAND AND YOUNG TREES

Background

At the heart of Happy Valley is a small burn-side wood that has evolved over time in a very informal way. Its appeal is, perhaps, that it has not been over-maintained. In order to keep this special quality, ongoing management needs to be carried out with a very gentle and sensitive touch.

Woodlands are not static habitats - as the trees grow, they not only affect each other, but the shrub and ground flora layers beneath them; they produce more shade which may make some areas damper than they had previously been. The wood has grown considerably since Edwin's death and therefore change is inevitable.

Although the land was open and exposed when Edwin began his garden, it was well sheltered from the prevailing south-westerly winds by the hills behind and the trees therefore developed well. As a result, the mutual shelter they provide has meant that the majority of trees are in good condition. Over the years, understorey and ground flora layers also became established.

Within the woods, there are a few areas of native willows (Eared and Tea-leaved), which may have been the only trees on the site before planting began. Over the years, Edwin planted a wide range of trees and shrubs, including some that are rarely seen in Orkney e.g. oak, monkey puzzle, beech, lime and southern beech. The bluebells are also a great attraction when in flower.

The woods are generally in good health, with some diversity of age range. There are no trees which would be classified as over-mature and most have a considerable lifespan still to run. In some parts of the wood, trees have however become rather overcrowded and some trees would benefit from more space to develop. However, this is an amenity, not a commercial, wood and there is no need to thin aggressively as this may make the wood appear too controlled and unnatural and could also allow wind damage to occur to other trees. There is, however, the need to cut back / remove some trees or branches which are inhibiting the development of other, perhaps more interesting, trees, e.g. it may be judged acceptable to remove a sycamore (which is a common tree in Orkney) in order to allow the full development of an oak (which is unusual in Orkney).

Lying and standing deadwood has been retained within the wood to encourage fungi and insects. Where this is felt to look too untidy, deadwood piles have been established.

No natural regeneration is apparent, though many trees appear to be seeding. The establishment of new trees is limited by low light levels within the woods. Some of the more recently planted trees are very tall and thin with weak stems, as they have grown up speedily in an attempt to reach the light. Some of these will never develop into an attractive form and could be removed as part of a thinning programme.

One factor threatening the health and accessibility of the wood is the presence of salmonberry, an extremely invasive species, which is spreading aggressively throughout the wood. This was planted by Edwin for shelter, but he was obviously unaware that it would become a problem in the future. Salmonberry is also present on land bordering Happy Valley. If unchecked, this plant will continue to smother surrounding vegetation, making access through the wood difficult and resulting in a decrease in the biodiversity of the wood. Since 2011 considerable efforts have been put into cutting the plant back and following this up with herbicide control, but there

are more areas of the plant still to tackle. There is also a small area of Japanese Knotweed, which should be more easily eradicated.

The property includes the fields to the north of the house. This has provided an excellent opportunity to plant further trees in these areas which should help protect the existing wood and make it more sustainable in the long-term. The soil is good and the shelter provided by the existing woodland has ensured that the young trees are establishing very quickly and healthily. They provide strong visual evidence that tree growth is affected by exposure, with trees close to the wood significantly larger than those on the northern side of the field.

Since 2006 approximately 1000 new young trees have been planted by the FHV in the eastern field. Species include Downy Birch, Rowan, Tea-leaved Willow and Aspen of Orkney native provenance, Common Alder, Larch, Sycamore, Bird Cherry, Lime, Holm Oak, Sweet Chestnut, Horse Chestnut, Sessile Oak, Western Hemlock, Beech and Copper Beech.

The trees were planted with plastic mulch mats and tree guards supported by stakes. As young trees have become established, FHV have removed the stakes and guards. More trees have been added at various times by groups and individuals. The trees lying to the south of the burn are not in the ownership of OIC and management work cannot currently be carried out there without the landowner's permission.

Aims and Objectives

- Ensure that the wood has a long-term future and remains safely accessible for people to enjoy.
- Ensure that the wood retains its informal character, providing good habitats for wildlife.
- Allow existing trees, including species which are uncommon in Orkney, to develop to the best of their potential.
- Increase the structural diversity of the wood, in terms of native tree species, understorey and ground flora of different ages.
- Create and maintain a range of woodland and non-woodland habitats, e.g. clearings and woodland edge. Where new planting is undertaken, a mix of native and non-native species will be used within and close to the existing woodland; any planting further away from the woodland will comprise a mix of native Orkney and Scottish species.
- Involve FHV, schoolchildren and other groups in the planning and care of trees.

Principles

- Undertake management with a gentle and sensitive touch, allowing a balance between tidiness and wildness; permitting safe access and retaining the informal character of the woodland.
- Use experienced tree surgeons for tree surgery work.
- Operations with potential to affect the integrity of the wood, e.g. felling, crown thinning and removal of deadwood should be carried out over several years, in stages, to ensure that affected parts of the wood are not exposed to an abrupt increase in wind exposure.
- Wherever possible, avoid works to trees during the bird nesting season which, for woodland species, generally extends from 1st April until 31st July.
- Erect warning signs when any felling or chainsaw work is in progress in the wood.

Action:	Lead Agency:	To be done by:	When:	Funded by:
Ongoing monitoring of trees to assess health and condition, to identify and mark any which are in an unsafe condition and require felling or pruning.	OIC.	OIC.	2017.	OIC.
Undertake felling and pruning of marked trees, in consultation with FHV.	OIC.	Horticultural contractor.	2017.	OIC. Complete
Include Happy Valley in OIC tree survey and management programme and report to FHV.	OIC.	Consultant tree surgeon.	2018 onward.	OIC.
Undertake an assessment with a view to placing a Tree Preservation Order on the wood.	OIC.	OIC.	2017-18.	OIC.
Check young trees twice a year and remove guards as necessary.	FHV.	FHV.	Ongoing.	Volunteer time.
Retain fallen deadwood in suitable places within wood.	FHV.	FHV.	Ongoing.	Volunteer time.
Continue eradication of invasive non-native plants, e.g. salmonberry, raspberry and Japanese knotweed through cutting followed by herbicide treatment.	OIC/FHV.	OIC/FHV.	Ongoing.	Volunteer time/OIC.
Seek permission to manage trees and invasive plants on neighbouring land which is in different ownership.	FHV.	FHV.	Ongoing.	Volunteer time.
Monitor invasive species.	FHV/OIC.	FHV.	Ongoing.	Volunteer time/ OIC.
Plant new trees and shrubs on OIC-owned land, using mainly species native to Orkney or Scotland, providing new woodland for the future. Replacing certain non-natives on a like for like basis may be appropriate in the mature woodland,	FHV.	FHV.	Ongoing.	Volunteer time. Subject to grant funding, e.g. from Woodland Trust

Complete installation of engraved tree marker stones on OIC-owned land.	FHV.	FHV.	2017-18.	Volunteer time.
Label trees as appropriate.	FHV.	FHV.	Aspirational.	Volunteer time.

THE BURN AND HYDROLOGY

Background

Edwin made major changes to the course of the burn, creating meanders, pools and waterfalls. Some of the pools are now becoming infilled with accumulated gravel. Works during 2012 repaired the burn edge to the western end, where serious erosion was occurring. The flow of water down the burn during and after heavy rainfall events can be very destructive; there will be a need therefore to constantly monitor the burn edges and structures and assess whether further works are required

Aims and Objectives

- Protect water quality and habitat for fish and other biodiversity.
- Retain built features, e.g. waterfalls, created by Edwin.
- Ensure burn-side paths remain sound and safe for public access.

Principles

- Ensure no chemicals or toxic materials run off into burn.

Action:	Lead Agency:	To be done by:	When:	Funded by:
Undertake a survey of the burn and identify remedial works required.	OIC.	OIC.	Aspirational.	OIC.
Prepare a work programme for the lifetime of the Management Plan.	OIC.	OIC.	2017.	OIC.
Check safety of burn-side paths and structures and repair as necessary.	OIC.	OIC/FHV FHV to report any obvious issues.	Ongoing.	As appropriate.
Repair sides of waterfall.	OIC/FHV.	OIC/FHV.	FV to alert OIC to issues.	As appropriate.
Remove corrugated asbestos from hydro scheme and elsewhere in woodland.	OIC.	OIC.	2017.	OIC.
Research the history of the Hydro-electric scheme and contact people who may have	FHV.	FHV.	Ongoing.	Volunteer time.

been involved.				
Record remaining infrastructure of scheme.	FHV.	FHV.	Ongoing.	Volunteer time.

THE POND

Background

The establishment of a wildlife pond at Happy Valley was identified as an action in the Orkney Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2013-2016. The pond was excavated in 2013, with funding provided by the Scapa Flow Landscape Partnership Scheme. Volunteers helped create a puddled clay base to the pond, avoiding the need to install an artificial liner. Although the water level decreases during the dry months of summer, the clay base has proved successful in maintaining water in the pond all year round. It is used by the RSPB field teacher as a pond-dipping site. A number of locally sourced flag iris and marsh marigold plants were initially planted along the pond margins; otherwise any plant colonisation within the pond has occurred naturally and includes bog pondweed and a water starwort. In summer 2015 Stenness Brownies sowed wildflower seed in the soil surrounding the pond, using seed which originated either from Happy Valley or nearby in Stenness.

Aims and Objectives

Maintain the pond as a simple wildlife pond which can be used for educational activities.
Allow the pond to develop naturally.

Principles

The pond and associated infrastructure should be as informal and 'natural' looking as possible.
All tree, shrub and waterside planting should be of Orkney native provenance.
Access to the pond should fit with circulation through this field.

Action:	Lead Agency:	To be done by:	When:	Funded by:
Update the risk assessment for the pond.	OIC.	OIC.	April 2017.	OIC.
Planting of waterside plants to be discussed and agreed, all to be of Orkney native provenance and grown locally.	OIC/FHV.	OIC/FHV.	Spring 2017 and 2018.	OIC.
Seek funding to design a leaflet featuring the pond and its wildlife.	FHV.	FHV.	Aspirational.	To be decided.
Leaflets to be designed and printed.	FHV.	FHV.	Aspirational.	To be decided.

BIODIVERSITY

Background

Happy Valley already has a variety of habitats - woodland, woodland edge, native willow scrub, grassland, heath and garden. It also has the capacity to enhance and extend the range of habitats available.

The wood provides cover and nesting sites for many birds and ravens regularly nest there despite the many visitors who pass by their nests. Sparrowhawks have also nested there in the past. The woods host many fungi, mosses, lichens and liverworts and a variety of ground flora plants.

The Scapa Flow Landscape Partnership Scheme set Happy Valley on the road to becoming a statutory Local Nature Reserve (LNR), to recognise its value for people and wildlife. In 2011 an invertebrate survey of the area was carried out, funded by SFLPS.

Happy Valley is also a people place and wildlife has, to date, lived happily alongside the many visitors to the site. There is the potential to develop more discrete habitats where birds may find quieter nesting and feeding areas.

Aims and Objectives

Retain and, where appropriate, enhance the biodiversity of Happy Valley, for people to experience and enjoy.

Principles

Maintain a balance between allowing public access and protecting wildlife.

Action:	Lead Agency:	To be done by:	When:	Funded by:
Establish Happy Valley as a Local Nature Reserve.	OIC.	OIC.	2017.	OIC.
Encourage visiting and local naturalists to hold biodiversity recording events at HV, sharing records with OWIARC.	OIC.	OIC.	Ongoing.	OIC.
Where possible, carry out more detailed habitat surveys of flora and fauna.	OIC.	OIC.	Aspirational.	OIC.

THE FIELDS

Background

The attached map identifies 6 areas of land which belong to the Happy Valley property. Two of these, areas 2 and 3, comprise the house and associated garden, along with the mature woodland. The remaining four fields were not used by the public in Edwin's day. Today they are described as:

Field 1, the 'pond' field which extends to 0.62ha. Apart from the pond this field is currently unmanaged. It contains some native wildflower interest, e.g. meadowsweet, meadow vetchling and sneezewort, as well as patches of docks and *Juncus* rushes and small patches of native trees. Galvanised gate is in good condition. A basic style

at lower end of field leads to mature woodland. New steps have been installed and the style is about to be replaced by a new gate.

Field 4, the ‘wildflower’ field which extends to 0.33ha. Wildflower plots were established in part of this field in 2008; species sown included red clover, water avens, common knapweed, bush vetch, meadow vetchling, devil’s bit scabious, cat’s ear and selfheal. Although overgrown, this area continues to provide significant quantities of seed for biodiversity enhancement projects to increase habitat for pollinating insects, in particular the nationally scarce great yellow bumblebee, *Bombus distinguendus*. The remainder of the field contains some native flora interest, as well as scattered docks and *Juncus* rushes. It is currently unmanaged. Galvanised gate is in good condition but does not close securely – tied together with rope.

Field 5, the north field which extends to 0.24ha, is located on the northern side of the Bigswell Road. It contains scattered *Juncus* rushes and docks and has less native flora interest. It is currently unmanaged. Galvanised gate is in good condition.

Field 6, the Young Tree field which extends to 0.88ha. Since the young trees were planted in this field, a grass path has been mown through it, creating a circular walk through the woods and back through the field to the car park. Top wire of eastern fence is broken, along with a strand of shire wire, may allow sheep to gain access from neighbouring field.

Aims and Objectives

Regard these fields as part of Happy Valley and plan for their integration into the site.

Manage certain fields for flora and fauna and investigate how this may be achieved through appropriate grazing.

Investigate and plan access through these areas to enhance the public enjoyment of the area and take pressure off some of the more heavily used areas.

Principles

Ensure that the gates and fencing around fields 1, 4 and 5 are of a suitable standard to enable sheep grazing.

Action:	Lead Agency:	To be done by:	When:	Funded by:
Field 1, the pond field				
Create a new path through this field, connecting with the main wood, thus providing a second circular walk from the car park.	FHV.	FHV.	Aspirational.	OIC/FHV. Subject to grant funding.
Agree a maintenance plan which will enable improvements to both the accessibility and biodiversity value of the field.	OIC	OIC/FHV	2018	OIC/FHV
Field 4, the wildflower field				
Retain OIC wildflower nursery in current location.	OIC.	OIC.	Ongoing.	No cost.

Lease this field for winter grazing by sheep. An initial one-year trial to be undertaken over the period October - February.	OIC.	OIC.	2017-2018.	OIC.
If grazing trial proves successful, repeat whilst undertaking annual reviews of the effects on the vegetation of the field.	OIC.	OIC.	Ongoing.	OIC.
Field 5, the north field				
Lease this field for summer grazing by sheep.	OIC.	OIC.	Spring 2017.	OIC.
In the longer term, consider use of part of the field as an 'overspill' parking area.	OIC/FHV.	OIC.	Aspirational.	OIC.
Field 6, the young tree field				
Maintain mown grass path through the field but leave the remainder of the field uncut.	OIC.	OIC.	Ongoing.	OIC.
Assess opportunities for further tree planting in this field.	FHV.	FHV.	Aspirational.	TBC.
Assess opportunities for seating and informal picnicking areas in shelter of young trees.	FHV.	FHV.	Aspirational.	TBC.

ACCESS AND CAR-PARKING

Background

The small car-park has recently been slightly extended and can now accommodate 5-6 cars. At peak times in summer this is under pressure and, in the longer term, it may be necessary to establish some additional informal parking space. However, the limited parking space also helps limit the number of people using the site at the same time, thus allowing visitors to enjoy the peaceful atmosphere and avoiding damage from over-use of the area.

Informal paths run through the wood, with a hierarchy of main routes and lesser, minor routes. These have been established by use and therefore represent the ways in which people want to move around the wood. In recent years gravel has been bought in to add to the paths and stop them becoming excessively muddy.

The Friends of Happy Valley have erected a small sign at the entrance to the track.

Aims and Objectives

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable members of the public to access and enjoy the wood and fields. • Enable disabled access, at least to the lawn of the house. 				
Principles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all new paths / car parking etc. are sensitively sited and informal in design. 				
Action:	Lead Agency:	To be done by:	When:	Funded by:
Maintain Happy Valley access track, topping up potholes etc.	FHV.	FHV.	As required.	Materials provided by OIC. Volunteer time.
Regularly check that all paths, rails, and steps are safe for public use. FHV to report issues to OIC.	OIC.	OIC/FHV.	Ongoing.	OIC.
Prepare a list of assets to be checked regularly and agree responsibilities.	OIC/FHV.	OIC/FHV.	2017.	OIC/FHV.
Regularly cut any other grass paths designated in future.	OIC.	OIC.	Aspirational.	TBC.

INTERPRETATION, INFORMATION & SIGNAGE

Background

There is currently no fixed interpretation (apart from some tree marker stones) at Happy Valley.

Happy Valley features in the leaflet *Orkney's Woodland Walks* which brings various visitors to the gardens.

Aims and Objectives

Enhance people's enjoyment and understanding of the site, whilst not detracting from its special atmosphere by encouraging over-use of the site.

Principles

All interpretation to be in keeping with the character and history of the place.

Action	Lead Agency	To be done by	When	Funded by
Erect a plaque, acknowledging the generous gifting of Happy Valley by Professor Isbister and explaining his ancestors' connections with the place.	OIC/FHV.	OIC/FHV.	Subject to funding.	OIC.
Erect carved 'Happy Valley' stone at track end.	OIC/FHV.	OIC/FHV.	Aspirational.	Subject to grant funding.

EDUCATIONAL AND RECREATIONAL USE OF SITE

Background

Happy Valley has always been a popular place to visit, but this seems to have increased over recent years, possibly due to general publicity and its inclusion in the Woodland Walks in Orkney leaflet. Apart from individual visitors, schools, youth groups, gardening clubs etc. are all making more use of the site. The RSPB Field Teacher brings parties of KGS pupils to do practical conservation work. An informal calendar system is circulated, so that everyone is aware of any groups that may be visiting and that visits do not coincide.

Aims and Objectives

Retain Happy Valley as a place that can be enjoyed by all.
Develop Happy Valley as a place that can be used as an educational resource on aspects of the area's flora and fauna.

Principles

Ensure that any additional use of the site does not detract from the quiet, informal atmosphere.
Avoid over-engineering of any additional facilities.

Action	Lead Agency	To be done by	When	Funded by
Encourage events which highlight the importance of trees to many bird species, invertebrates, mosses, lichens, fungi etc.	OIC/FHV	OIC/FHV.	Ongoing.	As appropriate.
Maintain calendar, keeping record of dates any groups are visiting the site and who is liaising with them. Keep OIC informed through monthly emails	FHV.	FHV.	Ongoing.	Volunteer time.
Make use of existing educational resources, e.g. OWP Woodland Boxes.	FHV.	FHV.	Ongoing.	N/A.
Develop educational sheets and resources about various aspects of Happy Valley.	FHV.	FHV.	Aspirational.	TBC.
Promote innovative use of site, e.g. for music, arts or craft events.	FHV.	FHV.	Aspirational.	TBC.

DECISION MAKING

Background

Although Happy Valley is owned by OIC, the Friends of Happy Valley have been an

important group in discussing work that is needed, arranging work parties and reporting any problems. FHV is now a registered charitable organisation, raising funds for its charitable objectives, thus adding more to an already beneficial partnership. Current economic conditions mean that OIC budgets are limited; a strong working partnership between OIC and the FHV therefore needs to be maintained, so that Happy Valley can be successfully and sustainably taken forward into the future.

Aims and Objectives

Create and maintain a strong decision-making partnership between OIC and the FHV of Happy Valley.

Principles

Ensure that all parties involved are kept informed of as appropriate.
Ensure that all decisions are made in an inclusive and open manner.

Action	Lead Agency	To be done by	When	Funded by
Maintain a good working partnership between OIC and the FHV of Happy Valley, so that roles and responsibilities, including those relating to health and safety, are clear.	OIC/FHV.	OIC/FHV.	Ongoing.	N/A.
Have a named OIC contact for the FHV, who will attend meetings and consult with them over decisions.	OIC.	OIC.	Spring 2017.	N/A.
Arrange regular FHV meetings	FHV.	FHV.	As appropriate.	Volunteer time.
Send update newsletters, emails as required.	FHV.	FHV.	As appropriate.	

FINANCES

Background

Orkney Islands Council owns Happy Valley and has responsibility as landowner to maintain the property. In recent years funding provided has enabled maintenance to be undertaken by FHV and the OIC Special Projects team. Further funds have been brought in from the Forestry Commission, e-forests, the Woodland Trust and the Scapa Flow Landscape Partnership Scheme.

The Friends also raise money through quizzes, Blue Door, tree sales and donations and all funds raised are used for various projects at HV.

Whilst OIC will do everything within its power to source funding for Happy Valley, the FHV may also proactively seek funds from sources which are not available to the Council.

Aims and Objectives

Seek all opportunities to maximise funding for Happy Valley. Make Happy Valley as self-sustaining as possible.				
Principles Identify a level of management that is sustainable and seek funding that will achieve low key but appropriate results.				
Action	Lead Agency	To be done by	When	Funded by
Confirm the level of funding which will be available from OIC and the FHV.	OIC/FHV.	OIC/FHV.	Ongoing.	N/A.
Identify where further funding will be required.	OIC/FHV.	OIC/FHV.	Ongoing.	OIC through officer time.
Identify potential external sources of funding.	OIC/FHV.	OIC/FHV.	Ongoing.	OIC through officer time.
Collect money that is publicly donated on site.	FHV.	FHV.	Ongoing.	Volunteer time.
Commission donations box.	OIC/FHV.	OIC/FHV.	Aspirational.	TBC.
Prepare and sell leaflet / DVD / photos / cards etc.	OIC/FHV.	OIC/FHV.	Aspirational.	TBC.

MONITORING				
Background All management plans need regular updating and reviewing.				
Aims and Objectives Ensure the management plan is regularly updated and remains in line with any new developments or changes in circumstance.				
Principles Maintain flexibility and allow plans to change as required.				
Action	Lead Agency	To be done by	When	Funded by
Prepare, agree and implement a maintenance and monitoring plan with roles and responsibilities identified.	OIC/FHV.	OIC/FHV.	2017.	OIC through officer time. FHV volunteer time.
Update management plan.	OIC/FHV.	OIC/FHV.	2021.	volunteer time.