



Verge Maintenance Plan 2024

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Document Control and Council Approval

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Introduction

Notes

1. Following the annual review of the Council's Verge Maintenance Plan this document has been revised for 2024.
2. Any changes are detailed in Table A.

Area.	Location.	2023 Designation.	2024. Designation.	Comments.
Kirkwall and St.Ola.	Old Finstown Road	N/A	Added to Schedule B.	Following request by Community Council this has been added to Schedule B to manage Ragwort.
Kirkwall and St.Ola.	Grainshore Road	N/A	Added to Schedule B	Following request by Community Council this has been added to Schedule B to manage Ragwort.
Stromness.	Garson Road	N/A	Added to Schedule B	Following request by Community Council this has been added to Schedule B to manage Ragwort.

1. Objectives

Orkney Islands Council as Roads Authority has a duty to maintain the public roads and ensure as far as possible that they are safe for road users, this includes the roadside verge.

Vegetation on either the roadside verge or private land should not restrict visibility at junctions, access points or bends. In addition, sightlines and minimum stopping distances should be kept clear and signs, lights, and marker posts clearly visible.

The Roads Management and Maintenance Plan 2023-2028 which is based on the good practice contained within the Code of Practice entitled “Well-managed Highway Infrastructure”, recognises that the cutting of verges is done primarily for road safety, to provide clear site lines and a safe refuge for pedestrians and other road users. In addition, however it also recognises that the Council has a duty under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 and has made a commitment to conserve and enhance biodiversity in Orkney in the Council Plan 2023 – 2028

The Verge Maintenance Plan recognises these aims and will contribute to the wider corporate objectives by managing the maintenance of the roadside verges in such a way as to provide a safe environment for all road users and enhance biodiversity. The Roads Authority will consult with Council Members, Community Councils and the Environment Officer when reviewing the plan.

The primary objectives of the verge cutting regime will be:

- To maintain safety.
- To prevent obstruction of sight lines, road traffic signs, barriers, and other structures.
- To inhibit the growth of injurious weeds (in accordance with the Weeds Act 1959).
- To prevent encroachment of vegetation onto the carriageway.
- To manage the roadside verges in a manner that promotes biodiversity by conserving, wherever possible, special wildlife habitats and wildflowers.

2. Specification for annual roadside verge cutting

2.1. Verge Cuts

- All verges outside the 30mph limits will be cut.
- The first swathe (up to 1.2m wide) from the edge of the carriageway will be cut.
- Where an open ditch lies adjacent to the carriageway the area up to the ditch only will be cut.
- Verges adjacent to open heathland or moorland will not be cut unless vegetation obstructs visibility.
- Verges in dune areas will be carefully cut to ensure that erosion does not occur.
- Conservation Verges which are listed in Schedule A will only be cut once at the end of the season.

2.2. Frequency

All roads will be cut twice per year, May/June, and September/October. This excludes conservation verges which will be cut once per year, in September/October and are as detailed in Schedule A.

2.3. Safety Cut

These cuts are primarily to maintain sight lines at road junctions and bends. All vegetation will be cut for a safe distance applicable to the character of the road and will include vegetation growing alongside adjacent walls and fences which may obstruct visibility. Vegetation unable to be cut by machine mounted mower will be strimmed by hand. Safety cuts will be undertaken throughout the season as required.

3. Dealing with Injurious Weeds

3.1. Responsibility

The control of injurious weeds is a statutory responsibility under The Weeds Act 1959. We will continue to work in accordance with this Act and with adjacent landowners to control and prevent the spread of injurious weeds.

3.2 Prescribed weeds

The prescribed weeds in the Act are:

- Ragwort.
- Broad leaved dock.
- Curled dock.
- Creeping or field thistle.
- Spear thistle.

3.3. Action

Action will be taken to reduce/remove these weeds, either by hand by the end of June, or by spraying prior to the end of September.

Areas requiring treatment have been compiled from various sources, including routine safety inspections and public reports, throughout the year and instructed as part of this plan. These are listed in Schedule B.

Schedule A – Conservation Verges

Mainland

Birsay

- Durkadale Road (Hundland Road to Kelda).
- A966 Costa Hill (north verge only from access up to Costa Hill North-westwards for approximately 340m).
- B9057 Hillside Road (Bogie Houses to Overabist).
- Hillside Road (Burn of Hillside to Wilderness).
- Hundland Road (A986 to Durkadale Road).
- Hundland Road (Hundland School House to Setter except 100m immediately westwards from Nisthouse Road and inside bend directly opposite Nisthouse Road).
- Nisthouse Road.

Burray

- Littlequoy Road (Greenwell corner to Littlequoy).
- Northfield Road (North verge only from Penang to end of road).

Deerness

- Denwick Road (From Upper Noltland to Car Park).
- Malisburgh Road

Evie

- Whitemire Road (Whitemire to Little Pow).

Harray and Firth

- Lyde Road (Netherhouse Road to Lyde).

Holm

- B9052 (Lyking to Ocklester Road).

Orphir

- Linnadale Road.
- Breck Road (South extent of trees to end of road).
- Smoogro Road (A964 to Muirhouse).
- Petertown Road.
- A964 Hobbister (south side only from Smoogro Road to East Hobbister).
- Waulkmill Road.
- Scorradale Road (Old School to Glenrae).

Rendall

- Kewing Road (Northwest side only from a point 10m north of Keigro to Gorseness Road).

Sandwick

- Brodgar Road (Ring of Brodgar to just north of Ring of Brodgar Car Park).
- Brodgar Road (North verge only from Veskyer South-eastwards for approximately 310m).
- Roundadee Road.
- Yesnaby Road (Bend at Cruland to Just below Borwick).

South Ronaldsay

- A961 Olad Brae (Gairaquoy to Tomisons Academy).
- B9044 South Cara Road. (A961 to Upper Cara).
- Aikers Road (Braehead Corner to A961 at Widewall).
- Aikers Road (Upper Cara to Kirkhouse Road).
- Flaws Road (A961 to South Flaws).
- Haybrake Road (Brandyquoy Road to Aikers Road).
- Honeysgeo Road (Bend below Hall of Cara to end of road).
- Kirkhouse Road (Aikers Road to Wheems).
- Uppertown Road (Quarry to end of road).
- Windwick Road (A961 to Massetter).

St Andrews

- B9052 (West side only from Easthouse southwards for approximately 170m)
- Garralanga Road (From bridge at Burn of Quoykea to end of road).
- Rerwick Road
- Tankerness Hall Road (From Rerwick road to north of S Bends).
- Tankerness Hall Road (From South of S Bends to Glebe).

St Ola

- Heathery Loan (A961 to East Tradespark).

Stenness

- Stymilders Road (Woodburn to New House)
- Bigswell Road (Newhaven to Stoursdale).
- Bigswell Road (Cot of Stoursdale to Upper Bigswell).

Stromness

- Kirbister Road (South verge only)

Islands

Eday

- B9063 between Water Tank Road and Guith Road, (except where cutting is required for road safety i.e., corners, summits, and junctions).
- B9063 (Cusby Road north for approx. 700m).

- Kirk Road.
- Westside Road (B9063 west for approx. 475m).
- Westside Road (Just south of Mussetter east for approx. 650m).
- Westside Road (Just below High-hill to west of Quarryhouse)
- Guith Road (Spences to B9063).
- Guith Road (West verge only between North Guith and Lesshammer.)
- Cusbay Road (B9063 to just east of South House).

Egilsay

- All verges to be cut at end of season.

Hoy

- Crockness Road (B9047 to halfway down brae towards Oban Cottage)
- Daystar Road
- Rackwick Road.
- Braebuster Road (Cattle grid at Hoy Lodge to Cattle grid south of Slack)

Rousay

- B9064 (Langskaill to Blossom).
- Westside Road (Dyke down to Sheep dip at south bend northwards for approx. 600m).
- Westside Road Grain south for approx. 700m).

Shapinsay

- Chapelbrae Road (B9058 to Cotbrae).
- Frustigarth Road (Two high cuts from B9058 to west boundary of Waterhouse)
- Swartaquoy Road (B9058 to access to Odinstone).
- Swartaquoy Road (East Laird to Swartaquoy).
- Girnigoe Road (B9058 to Lingro).
- Girnigoe Road (Veantroee to Girnigoe).
- Westhill Road (Furrowend to the Ayre).
- Westhill Road (North verge only from Furrowend to Rosecraigie)
- Hill Road (Just south of Cot-on-hill to Waterhouse).

Sanday

- Langbigging Road (Thrave to end of road).
- Cleat Road (Brig at shore Southwards for approx. 222m).
- Ortie Road (Ortie to Whitemill Beach).
- North Loch Road (Two high cuts from Roadside to just north of Galilee).
- B9070 (Loth Terminal to Access tracks to Wind Turbines).

South Walls

- East Branch Road (Chuccaby to Sandsdale Road)
- Sandsdale Road (Nordale to Aithsdale)
- Sandsdale Road (North verge only from Kings Road to Stromabank Hotel)
- Sandsdale Road (North verge only from Snelsetter to Quoy)

- Snelsetter Road

Stronsay

- Hescombe Road

Wyre

- All verges to be cut at end of season.

Schedule B – Injurious Weeds to be reduced/removed

Parish.	Road.	Location.	Weed.
Kirkwall and St.Ola.	Old Finstown Road.	Verges along Walliwall Quarry.	Ragwort.
Kirkwall and St.Ola.	Grainshore Road.	Verges around Galt View.	Ragwort.
Stromness.	Garson Road.	Opposite Stromness Academy.	Ragwort.