



### **Where to find our Highland Cows**

Swanston Farm is a working farm and we have our own herd of Highland Cows which live a natural life on our 300 acres of hill land. Along with our Texel-cross breeding sheep and our cluster of free range hens, the produce from our farm animals are used in our Brasserie, providing excellent quality beef, lamb and eggs.

Visitors to Swanston Farm are able to see our Highland Cows if they are prepared to take a wee walk up the hill! We recommend sturdy trainers or preferably walking boots, along with appropriate clothing for the weather conditions before venturing out up the slopes at the bases of Caerketton and Allermuir Hills of the Pentland Hills Regional Park.

You can sometimes get quite close to our Highland Cattle - enough to take good photographs - however as we do not handle or hand-feed our cattle - and therefore they are not used to humans touching them - we recommend that you don't try to cuddle or stroke them! Please keep dogs under strict control around them and avoid startling the cattle.

**In this booklet you can see a map of our Highland Cow Zone, follow a walking route and find out more about our Highland Cows.**

**Happy Exploring!**

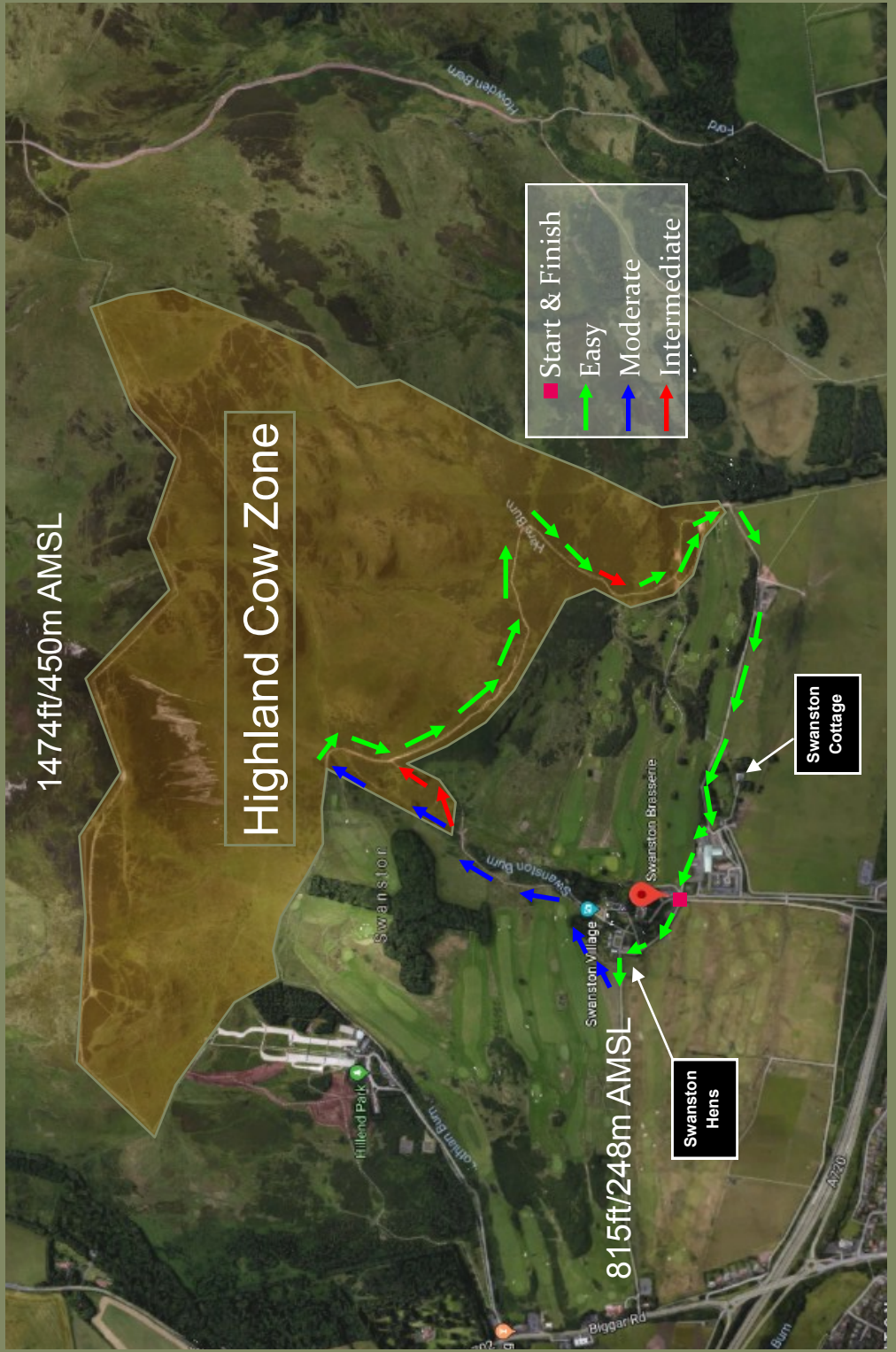
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Park or walk to the **Pentland Hills Regional Park car park** next to **Swanston Brasserie** and your walk to find the Highland Cows starts here.

Our Highland Cows roam 300 acres of our hill land. The land rises from c.815ft/248m above sea level right up to c.1474ft/450m above sea level. There is a stone track that follows the low-lying area of the Highland Cow Zone, however this is not suitable for buggies or young children that tire easily.

Please be aware that aside from well-worn grass tracks and stone paths, this 300 acres of land also consists of burns (streams/small rivers), ravines, gorges, scree (unstable stones underfoot), cliffs, vertical slopes and drops, grassy knolls (small to large hillocks of mossy soft turf that may be unstable underfoot), bogs (deep muddy wet areas), gorse bushes (very spiky and impenetrable!), boulders and varying sizes of stones and rocks, so please choose your walking routes carefully.

**On your walk you may come across wild deer, grouse, partridge, birds of prey, rabbits, hares and other wildlife. Please respect the nature and the land and take your litter home and don't allow dogs to chase the wildlife or livestock.**

For a 30-40 minute walk, you can take this walking route, during which you may be able to spot our Highland Cows. Start at Swanston Brasserie and walk up around Swanston Village (past our very friendly hens!) and follow the stone track up hill until you arrive at the gates on to the hill land. **Please remember to shut the gates behind you and keep dogs under strict control around livestock and wildlife.** Follow the stone tracks upwards (Edinburgh city centre should be behind you) until you meet the flat stone track traversing across the hill from left to right. Turn right and follow this track (Edinburgh city centre should now be on your right). This path involves fairly straight-forward up hill and down hill gradients and finally reaches the far end of the farm and the hill land boundary gates which border on to the land at Dreghorn (Edinburgh city centre will now be in front of you). Take a right after going through the gate and follow the flat farm track that takes you between the golf course (on your right) and fields containing horses (on your left), past the stone wall that borders the gardens to the famous white 'Swanston Cottage' that was once the holiday home for Robert Louis Stevenson (this is now a private home) and finally in to the stable yard where you can take a right behind the muck heap and in to the Swanston Brasserie and Swanston Golf Club car park and make your way back to where you started.

## Facts about our Highland Cows

### **Our herd consists of mostly female cows.**

Our youngest were born in 2016 and our oldest born in 2012.

**We leave our cattle as natural as possible with their horns on, however sometimes our Highland Cattle have one or both horns removed at around 3-4 weeks old if there are complications with the growth. This is done under local anaesthetic.**

We don't hand-feed our cows or give them any hard feed/cattle feed - they graze the hill land all year round and we supply them with hay in the winter months to keep them well-fed. Hand-feeding cattle can make them very human-orientated or human-dependant and we prefer ours to live as natural, organic and free range a life as possible.

**Our cows are remarkable jumpers! They have been known to take a liking to a round of golf and every now and then pop over the fence on to the golf course.**

Along with our Swanston Lamb and Swanston Free Range Eggs, our Swanston Highland Beef is used in our Brasserie here at Swanston Farm. You can sample our produce when available from our All Day Menu, including our famous Swanston Beef Burger.

**Our herd is extremely agile and the cows like to head up the steep slopes to the heights of Caerketton and Allermuir Hills during the warmer summer months and can often be found sleeping on the peaks, in the cool winds.**

Our cattle drink from the many burns and springs on our hill land, however they also get a lot of moisture from the many grasses that they graze.

**There is a wide range of legume species and grasses that grow on our hill land, giving our cattle a healthy dose of natural sugars, natural probiotics and medicinal anthelmintic plants.**

We used to have a pet Highland Cow called Lily and she lived to the grand old age of 25.

**Our herd is often seen grazing with our resident deer and they all co-exist happily together on the hills.**

Our Highland Cattle keep our hills happy and healthy by grazing down the grasses and plants, encouraging more and stronger growth as the seasons change. They even eat the young growths of gorse and the coconut-smelling yellow flowers during Spring and Summer. This all helps the natural habitat thrive, which is also home to a wide range of wildlife and plant life.