

56297 New Calton Burial Ground

New Calton Burial Ground Night time Closure: why, and how for long?

Why has this public space been closed, and for how long will it be closed, at night?

The New Calton Burial ground has been closed due to anti-social behaviour from young people, initially taking place in Old Calton Cemetery with many Police incidents which led to the closure of the burial ground in evenings. These were being presented as 'cave raves', with underage drinking, drug taking and abuse of the public and visitors.

On discovering that Old Calton Cemetery was locked, they moved on to carrying out their activities in New Calton cemetery which has facilitated the need to lock the burial ground overnight. Closure of the two cemeteries has also removed the need for operational Police Officers to be there at evenings and allowing them to be freed up for other duties.

This will be reviewed and assessed after a suitable time.

When was the bottom gate opened, and what was the reasoning for that?

Are these two factors linked?

The bottom gate should only be opened during the day and locked in the evening. In the past (pre-2016), the bottom gate was locked. It was felt there was a health and safety issue dealing with the steps within this historical site from previous management, but following discussion with Edinburgh World Heritage and Parks Department (Bereavement Services were then part of) it was decided that we would open the gate to allow access.

These two factors are not linked.

What evidence of antisocial behaviour (if any) has led to changes in policy and practice for this Burial Ground over the last twenty years?

Is this just a seasonal arrangement?

In 2020, due to nightly vandalism of an antisemitic and homophobic nature, the cemetery was locked to prevent these occurrences. When the Police apprehended the perpetrator, the cemetery was reopened.

As previously mentioned in A1, we have had increased anti-social behaviour and Response Police Officers called to incidents within the cemeteries.

There are no seasonal arrangements recorded.