

# Rainy weather draws crowds to the hidden world beneath Edinburgh's Royal Mile

**Wet July drives record breaking numbers underground to unravel Edinburgh's dark past at The Real Mary King's Close**

With the Met Office confirming this July was the UK's wettest since 2009, and the sixth wettest July on record, it's probably no coincidence The Real Mary King's Close reported a record-breaking number of visitors choosing to get out the wet and take the journey underground to the celebrated spooky attraction. There were 30.5k visitors to the historic Close beneath Edinburgh's iconic Royal Mile last month – the highest number in July ever.

Celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, The Real Mary King's Close has not only established itself as one of Edinburgh's top tourist attractions, but as one of the UK's most highly rated experiences on TripAdvisor. Visitors journey underground, encounter fascinating former residents, and become immersed in the city's secrets and untold stories.

The Close has produced over 250,000 hours' worth of tours since 2003 and continues to provide both tourists and locals with a fascinating glimpse into the city's dark past, such as the extreme living conditions during the plague or the harsh effects of social hierarchy during the 17th century.

Once vibrant and bustling with life, Mary King's Close was a busy thoroughfare filled with traders and Old Town residents, as well the occasional royal visitor. In 1567, Mary Queen of Scots was held under house arrest at the home of the Lord Provost, Simon Preston, on the neighbouring Stewart's Close – which can be seen at The Real Mary King's Close today. When

the plague arrived during the 1640s, the street's close quarters made a perfect breeding ground for infection, permeating its homes and affecting the lives of the residents.

**Paul Nixon, General Manager of The Real Mary King's Close said;**

“As we know, summer in Scotland does not always mean sun! However, with a history as rich as Edinburgh's, people are never short of things to do. Last month we had a record-breaking number of visitors for the month of July, with over thirty thousand people journeying underneath the iconic Royal Mile to learn all about the city's mysterious past. The wet month certainly made people reconsider plans, and look for indoor activities.

At The Real Mary King's Close, we are passionate about storytelling and creating unforgettable experiences that transport our visitors back in time. We are thrilled to have been recently named as one of the Top 10 visitor attractions in the UK and cannot wait to welcome more curious souls this month during the Fringe Festival, rain or shine!”

For more information and bookings please visit:  
<https://www.realmarykingsclose.com>

