

# Nelson Monument to open after lockdown

**An historic Edinburgh landmark and museum which has been closed since lockdown will re-open next month, the council has confirmed.**

The Nelson Monument on Calton Hill will welcome visitors for the first time in more than four years following repairs.

Cllr Val Walker, Edinburgh Council's culture and communities convener, said: "We're looking to reopen the Monument from May this year." She added that the 210-year-old hilltop tower would remain open over summer before closing for another few weeks while further work is carried out.

Friends of Calton Hill, a group of local volunteers who help to maintain the area, shared photos online as fencing went up around the attraction earlier this month. They said repairs were originally due to start in February before the project was delayed.

Speaking to the LDRS, a spokesperson for the group said they were "keenly awaiting the reopening of the ground floor museum of the Nelson Monument".

They added: "It's been closed since the pandemic, but it's in good condition – and there are two public toilets which we really want to see being made accessible for visitors."

Scaffolding has now been erected around the parapet at the top of the tower in preparation for a new mast being built. This will allow for refurbishment of the time ball – which was

added in 1853 and is lowered as the one o'clock gun is fired from Edinburgh Castle.

The ground floor museum – which features exhibitions and displays on the Battle of Trafalgar and Admiral Lord Horatio Nelson which the monument commemorates – is free to visit while it costs £6 to climb the tower.

Both were closed in 2020 during the pandemic, when structural issues were first identified.



Pictured Nelson Monument, Calton Hill: Robin Robertson – Bright Side Studios – Alasdair Roberts

From New Year's Day to Burns Night on 25 January 2020, Message from the Skies returned for a free journey of discovery through the streets of Edinburgh, the world's first UNESCO City of Literature.

"The main elements of the repair to date have been to the building itself," Cllr Walker explained. "We've also been looking into replacing the mast on top of the monument and full refurbishment of the time ball, both of which have required working with specialist teams and a large capital

investment.

"I'd like to thank our residents for their patience whilst we made essential repairs to the Nelson Monument.

"We're looking to reopen the Monument from May this year. Then re-opened the monument will operate for the summer months while a new mast is built and the time ball mechanism fully refurbished and a new automated system created.

"The Monument will then close again around late September for the installation of the refurbished time ball and new mast. Installation will take some three weeks however this will be weather dependent so exact timings may change.

"I'm really looking forward to seeing residents and visitors enjoying the Monument again this summer ahead of the full restoration later in the year."

by Donald Turvill Local Democracy Reporter



Nelson Monument. Photo: Martin P. McAdam [www.martinmcadam.com](http://www.martinmcadam.com)