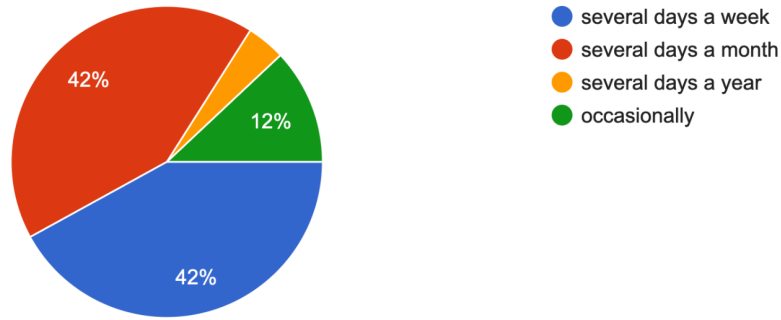


Friends of Calton Hill **Membership Survey**

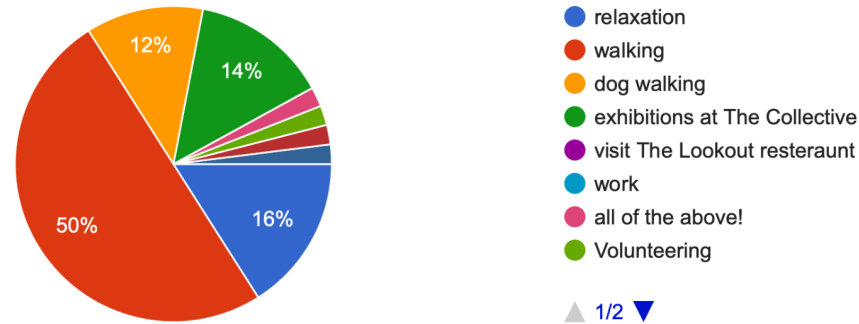
Edinburgh, May 2023

From 18 April to 7 May 2023, we asked our members to complete a survey. It was prepared to minimize bias and cover a wide range of potential subjects. A total of 50 members responded and we are pleased to announce the results of this survey below.

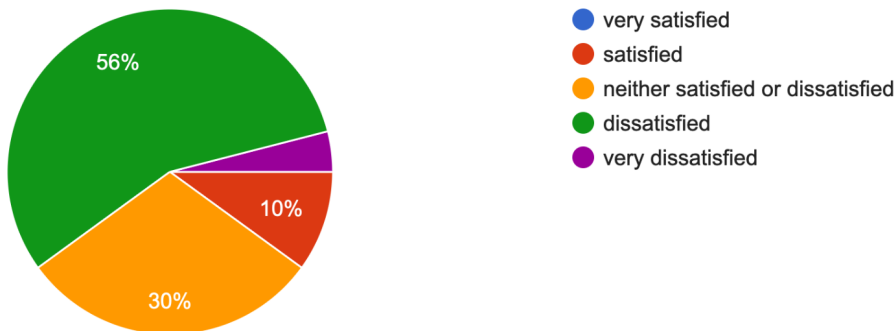
Question One: How frequently do you visit Calton Hill?



Question Two: Why do you visit Calton Hill?

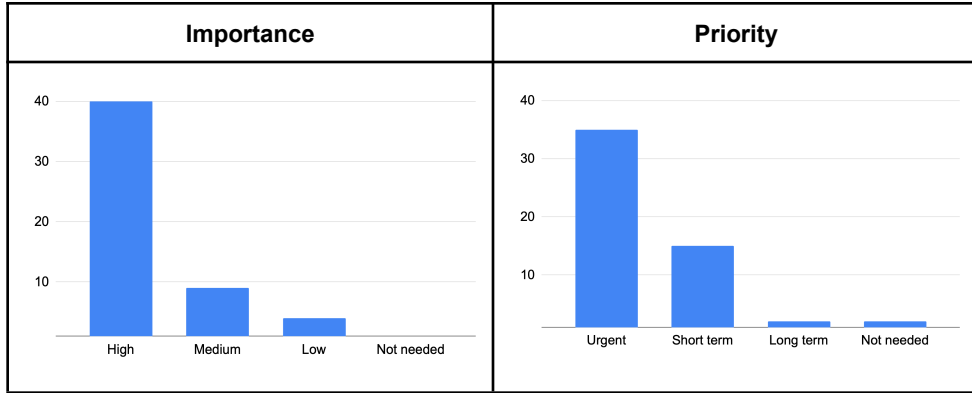


Question Three: How satisfied are you with the present condition of the Hill?

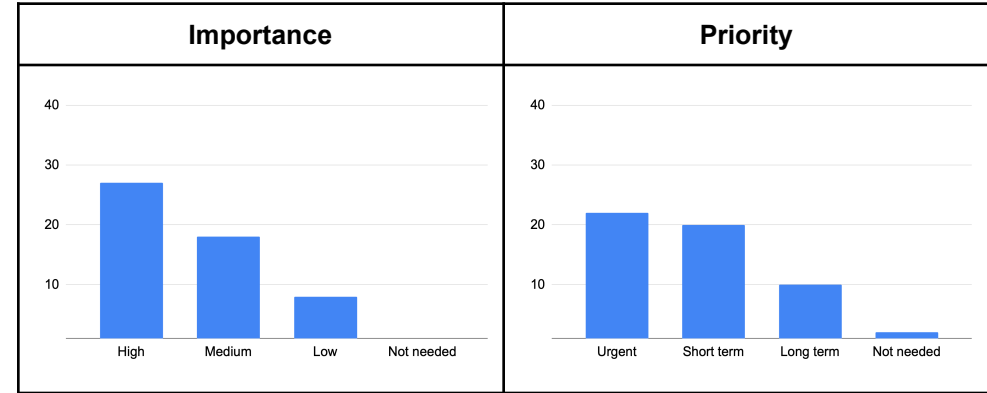


Question Four: What changes members would like to see on Calton Hill, both in terms of importance and priority (urgency).

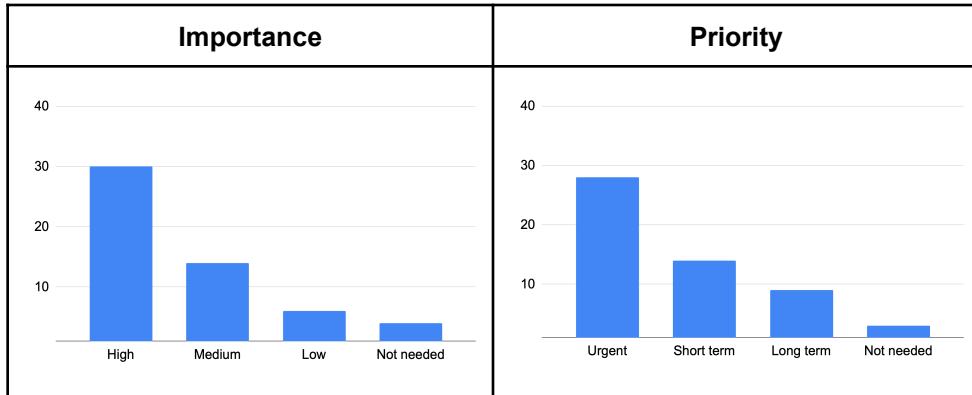
4.1 - Litter Management



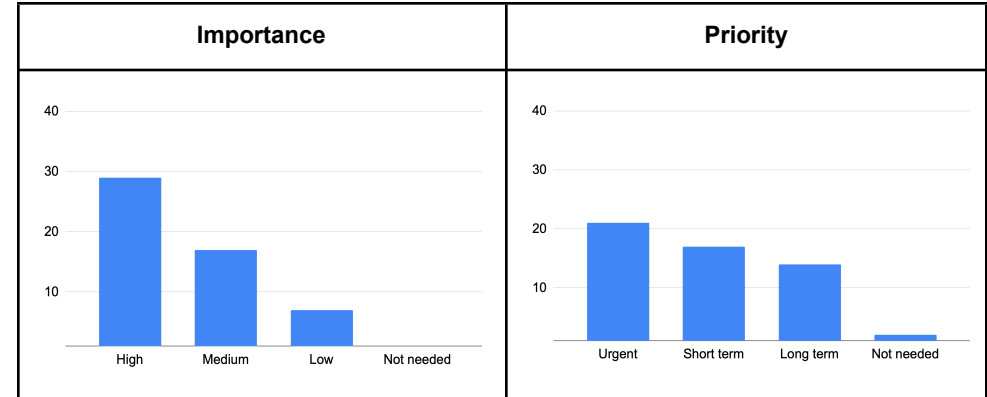
4.3 - Reinstating Grass Areas



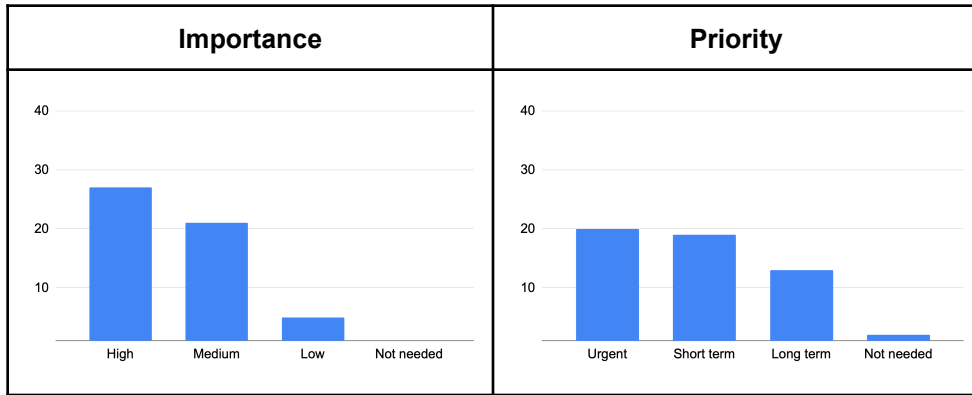
4.2 - Limiting Vehicle Access



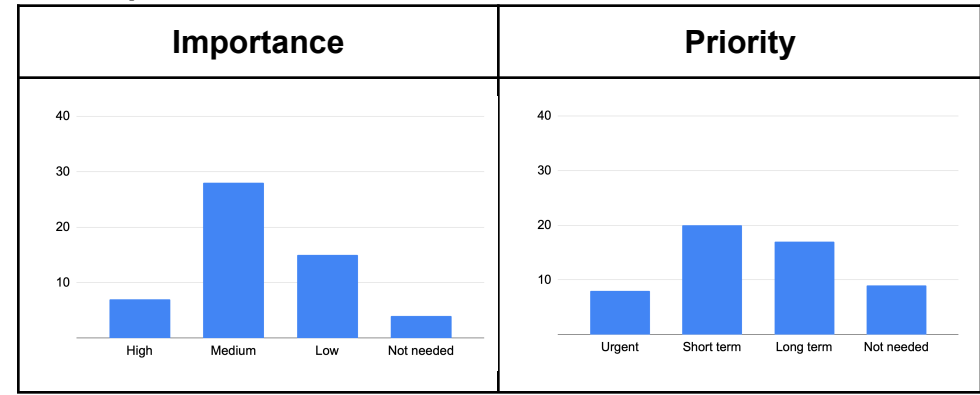
4.4 - Repairing Eroded Paths



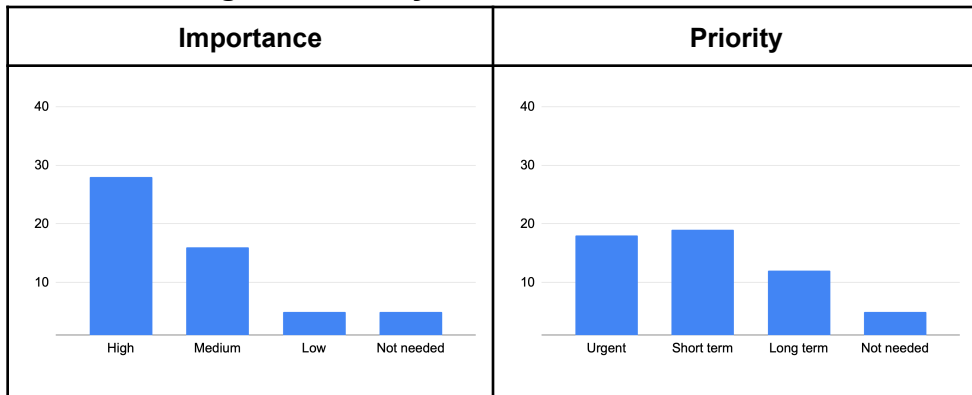
4.5 - Protection of Monuments



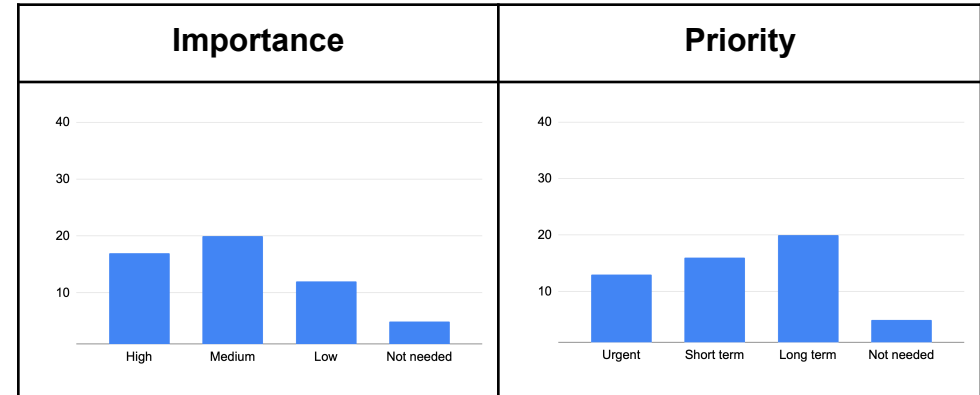
4.8 - Improved Disabled Access



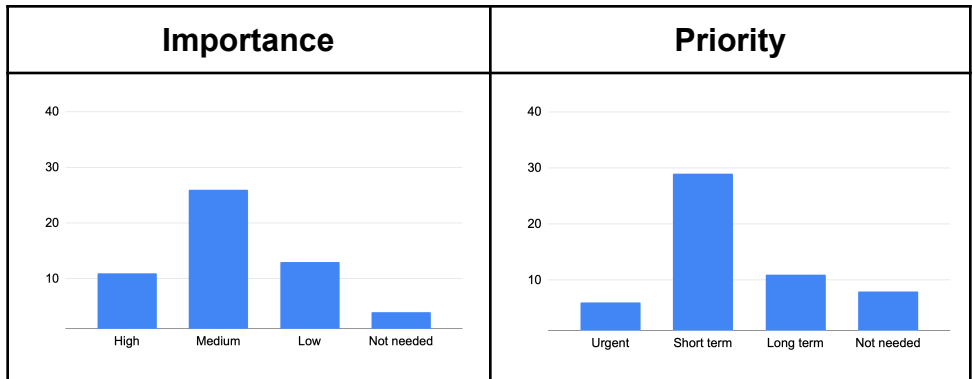
4.6 - Protecting Biodiversity



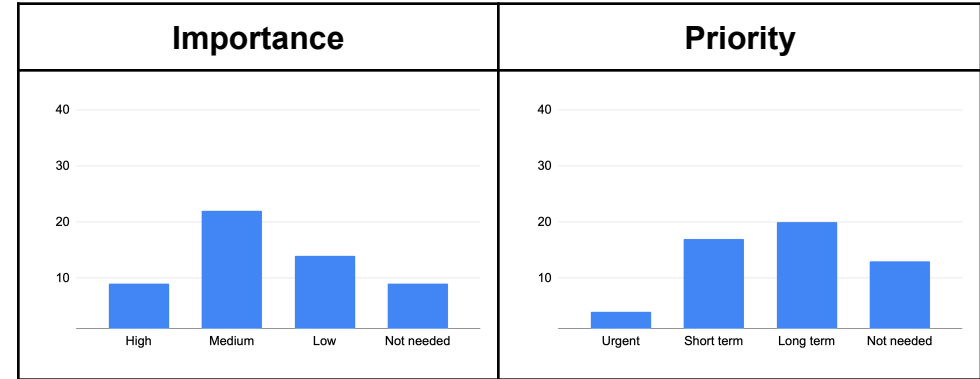
4.9 - Planting Shrubs/Trees



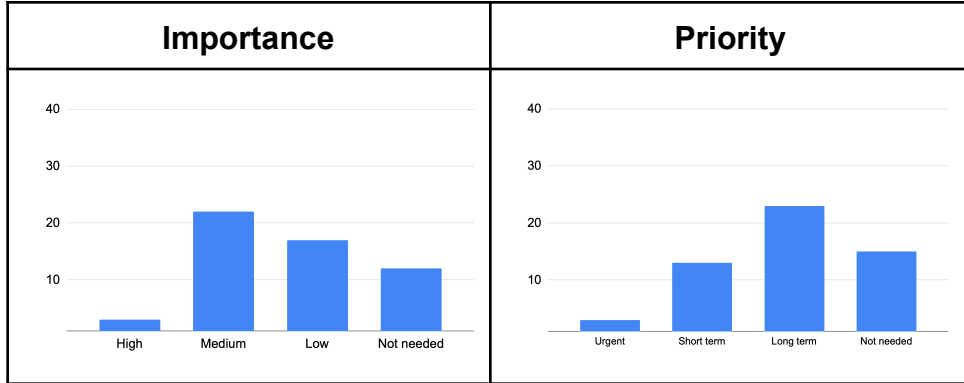
4.7 - Improved Toilet Facilities



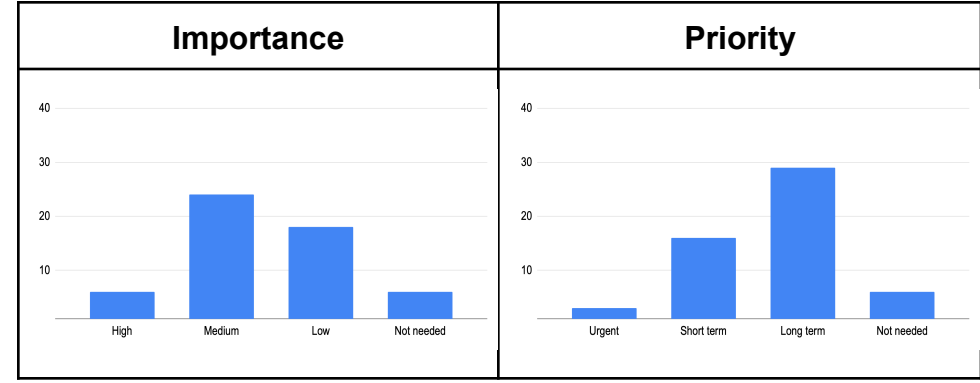
4.10 - Improved Safety



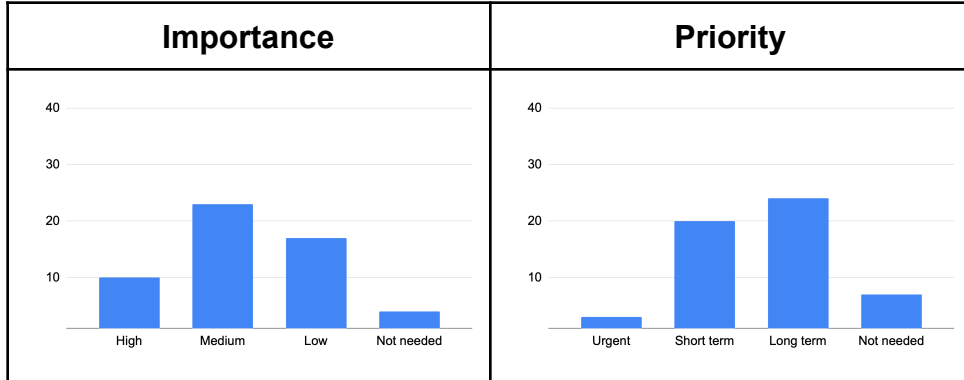
4.11 - Improved Pedestrian Access



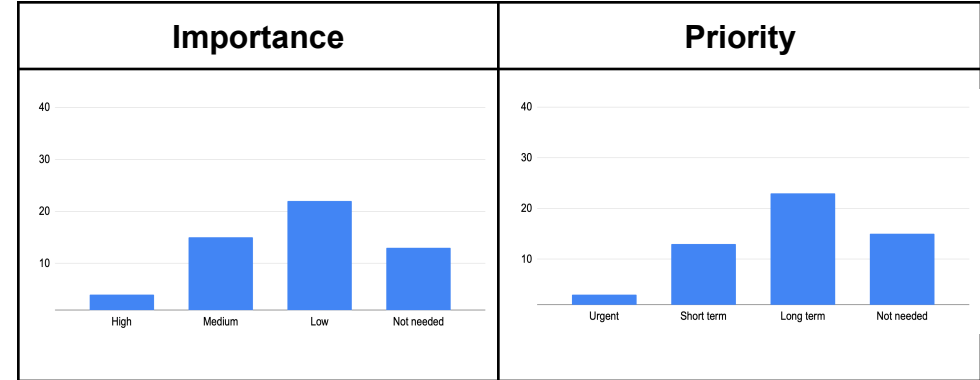
4.14 - Improved information boards



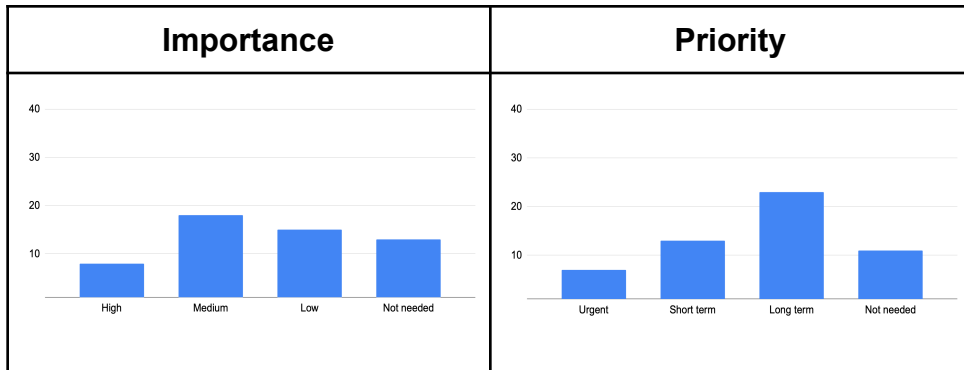
4.12 - Improved Seating



4.15 - Improved refreshment facilities



4.13 - Improved Signage (directions)



Question Five: Each respondent was asked for up to three specific changes (in no particular order) they would like to see on the hill.

We received 105 responses, of which the most popular categories were litter bins and litter management (22) and the closure of Calton Hill Drive to unauthorised vehicles (20).

Other subjects mentioned were lighting (9), security and safety (8), biodiversity (6), toilets (6), reinstatement of grass areas (5), paths and gutters (5), and monuments (5).

Also receiving attention were signage and information (4), seating (3), Regent Walk (2), and the western section of the hill (2) in addition to some unique ideas and longer comments.

The suggestions are listed thematically below.

Litter (22)

1. Provide more litter bins
2. Providing more litter bins
3. More Litter bins
4. More litter bins, and frequent collections
5. more litter bins and regular collection as more folk use the area
6. More bin places at various points on the hills
7. There should be a much greater provision of litter bins, with good signage to encourage their use by all visitors.
8. More rubbish bins, more regularly emptied, particularly in summer.
9. Provision of more bins and signs/monitoring re: littering and other anti-social behaviours.
10. Litter. More bins and perhaps a litter picking club could help.
11. more litter bins with more frequent emptying
12. Rock path/around the observatory, more or larger bins, signage to encourage visitors to reduce littering, litter picking
13. Improve litter management
14. Removing all surface and embedded litter and rubbish from all areas of the hill.
15. Litter removal, especially along the Regent Gardens path

16. Regular cleaning and rubbish removal (maybe additional bins),
17. Improved litter management - emptying bins more frequently at top of
18. Deep litter clean and litter management plan developed and agreed with the Council
19. better litter control
20. Improving maintenance of park - litter collection, gritting in the winter meet staff weekly to help pick up litter
21. Fining people who litter on the hill
22. Ban release of balloons (littering on giant scale)

Calton Hill Drive (20)

1. Enforcing closure of Calton Hill Drive to unauthorised vehicles
2. enforce unauthorised vehicles from entering
3. Enforcing closure to unauthorised vehicles
4. Enforcing the closure of Calton hill drive to unauthorised vehicle
5. Enforcing the closure of Canton Hill Drive to unauthorised vehicles
6. Closure to unauthorised vehicles
7. Enforcing closure to non-authorized vehicles
8. And good idea to enforce closure to unauthorised vehicles.
9. Vehicle access control on Carlton Hill Drive
10. Making sure the barrier at last becomes operational to limit vehicular access
11. Improved restrictions for vehicle access
12. ban un-necessary vehicle traffic
13. Finding workable solution to allow authorised vehicles to access
14. Close Calton Hill Drive to unauthorised vehicles (and/or provide a safe pedestrian path on the drive)
15. Only allowing taxis and disabled pass vehicles up Calton Hill Drive and enforcing this.
16. Access overall for pedestrians with limited disabled access to cars.
17. Prevent inessential traffic access including taxis, buses enforcing closure to unauthorised vehicles while enabling disabled access
18. The closure of Calton Hill Drive should be rigorously enforced by proper use of the large gates at the foot beside the entrance to the former Royal High School (which have mechanisms allowing them to be opened/closed by the insertion of a code on a keypad there). Only emergency or essential service vehicles should be permitted onto the upper Hill.

19. Limit car park movements
20. reduce amount of tarmac (turning area is far too large) and plant a fruit tree garden

Lighting (9)

1. Extending lighting of paths
2. Improving lighting on paths
3. Extending lightening on the paths
4. Improved lighting for access after dark
5. Lighting, low level on the eastern paths
6. Improved lighting so that we feel safer walking in the evenings - or maybe there should be a dusk to dawn curfew so that the hill isn't used for nocturnal parties ...!
7. Similarly to the first point lighting is really important, surely spring is here and summer is coming up, so the natural light will help with the issue, however coming fall the issue will become prominent again.
8. Increased lighting around the disabled car park and Waterloo steps
9. Keep lighting at minimum levels: more is not required, and would only add to light pollution - Calton Hill is NOT a park! Other cities manage to keep their wild places dark, thereby discouraging night visitors!

Safety and security (8)

1. Good idea to restrict access by visitors and during events
2. Building gates for security at night
3. LIMIT RISK OF FIRE: by banning barbecues and fireworks
4. Improve policing (to deter midnight fireworks, drag racing, assault)
5. Security patrols to improve safety at night
6. An emergency hypothermia blanket in a central location
7. Safer access for pedestrians, including hand rails on steep paths
8. installing more stairs on the east side: currently there are too many "ramps" which slide dangerously when it rains.

Biodiversity (6)

1. More areas planted/managed for improved biodiversity (can the burnt area around Regent Walk be planted with biodiversity as a priority?)
2. Balance between Park and Natural landscape

3. Where possible, replace or diversify grassland areas with wildflowers.
4. Careful planting - not popping trees in to tick a project box
5. Keep human intervention to a minimum vis-a-vis planting and other strategies.
6. Removal of invasive species such as the few-flowered leek growing along Greenside Path

Toilets (6)

1. Providing public lavatory
2. Building a public lavatory
3. Building public toilets with disabled entrance
4. A discreet toilet facility would be welcome but would obviously need cleaning/maintenance.
5. Introduction of (a) public toilet and (b) more bins would be welcome so long as (a) could be locked at night and (b) were regularly emptied throughout the day.
6. Lavatory - who is going to clean it?

Reinstatement of grass areas (5)

1. Replanting grass area
2. Reinstatement of grass areas as an urgent priority
3. Reinstating the grass on the top of the hill between the National Monument and the Observatory.
4. Filling in of the various holes in the grass on the southern side of the hill, which have caused multiple ankle injuries
5. re-instate the grassy areas as I think this will improve the general look of the fabulous hill!

Paths and gutters (5)

1. Improving paths (access from Greenside church), clearing gutters from mud and vegetation to ensure rain water can clear easily
2. Removing all the earth and leaves blocking the open guttering along all the paths.
3. Improving pathways and making new ones to protect the grass areas
4. Prevent the creation of 'desire paths' by making clearer and more direct pathways to points of interest. And also patch up the areas of the hill between 6 and 8 that have been dug up by foxes and dogs.
5. Low level shrubbery to protect against erosion

Monuments (5)

1. Repair and protect monuments
2. Implementing a maintenance and repair programme for monuments.
3. Preventing access atop the National Monument
4. Reduce access to the National Monument by lowering ground level on its western elevation, as per Calton Hill Management Plan.
5. Improving access to the National Monument by building stairs etc

Signage and information (4)

1. Improving pathways and signage
2. Clearer signage to the hill.
3. view points with explanatory boards
4. Perhaps have information boards to inform people they're visiting a wild area and to be aware of wildlife, and to take their litter away with them

Seating (3)

1. Providing more seating
2. Seating and accessibility.
3. Installing picnic tables near the observatory with attendant litter bins.

Regent Walk (2)

1. Tidying up fire damaged areas Regent Walk area
2. Repairs to the wall on Regent Walk are especially urgent since the fire last year, which further damaged the fabric. People keep taking the fallen stones and building cairns with them. There is only one bench along here (on which sadly I understand somebody was found dead a few years ago), and while I love the fact that nobody else walks along this path, I think it could be a nicer place for people to sit and take in the view.

Western section (2)

1. Restoration of overgrown and derelict sections (especially the western side).
2. Attending to the overgrown and derelict western area of the hill. This is also a fire risk.

Unique ideas (5)

1. Forcing the restaurant to serve refreshments and light meals in addition to full dining
2. more direct route up from Leith Street / Omni (with steps if necessary)
3. Stop the hill being a focus for independence rallies
4. Stop the Bethane Festival in May
5. then picnic tea, bring your own

Longer comments (5)

1. The Regent Garden Path needs a lot of work. Something needs to be done about the area around the poor tree at the entrance, which is currently used as a destination for people to have casual sex and is consequently covered in soiled loo roll and condoms. Lighting might act as a deterrent. There is also a tremendous amount of broken glass all the way up, which is very dangerous. When it rains, stones and mud cascade off the edge of the hill and onto the path. And people use the green area towards the brow of the hill as a public toilet.

2. We need to reverse the erosion of the previously grassed areas on the top of the Calton Hill and restore them to a condition which contributes to the ambience of the Hill's environment as a whole. The number of tourists visiting the Hill is gigantic and the footfall of visitors to the Hill has entirely eroded in recent years the vegetation which formerly covered three particular areas, namely (i) the area in front of (i.e. immediately to the west of) the National Monument; (ii) the area on the southern ridge above Regent Walk (to the south of the National Monument) giving southerly views toward Holyrood and Arthur's Seat; and (iii) the area surrounding the trig-point on the northern side of the Hill's summit which affords views over the Firth of Forth. The erosion of these areas has done more to degenerate the condition of the Hill as a pleasant place to visit or walk than any other factor. If the number of visitors cannot be restricted/controlled, these areas should be paved and the shortest routes between them laid out with stone-built pathways (as seen in Holyrood Park) and notices or small railings/fences encouraging visitors not to walk on the grass. Alternatively the areas referred to, and perhaps the top of the Hill as a whole, should be 're-wilded' by the planting of new grasses (not lawns but wilder grasses) and new bushes (such as whins/gorse) so as to reproduce as far as possible the environment which exists on the hilly areas in the Holyrood Park. This should have the effect of discouraging visitors from stravaiging/wandering over every square inch of the Hill's summit and instead confine their walking to informal paths which would be created naturally between the bushes, allowing the wilder grasses to flourish wherever they were not situated on one of the informal paths.

3. More 'facilities', in a city area of steep rocky hill, will only encourage yet more visitors, and necessitate increasing input into eroded areas and litter management. Encouraging ever more people to visit, specially huge stamping/noisy crowds, throughout the

year, day and night, will inevitably cause further degradation of the natural landscape and wild areas, lower biodiversity (too much disturbance for ground-nesting birds, no more Skylarks, no more Harebells etc), and detract from the existing monuments and buildings, and the peace and quiet of what is predominantly a wild area (Calton Hill is NOT a park)!

4. Do not litter the space with structures which do not chime with the originals. Such as the shed like structure now visible against the skyline alongside what was a classical symbolic trio

5. Repairing/reopening existing infrastructure (floodlights, gates to block vehicle access, Nelson monument to reopen to public.