

# **Edinburgh Castle welcomes first visitors this morning after coronavirus lockdown**

## **Edinburgh Castle has reopened today.**

A number of new safety and hygiene measures will be in place at these sites. Tickets must be booked in advance, while on site cash payments are no longer being accepted for the foreseeable future, with visitors being asked to use contactless payment where possible. Capacity will be reduced on site, one-way systems will be in place in some locations, and access to small enclosed spaces where physical distancing is not possible will be restricted.

Visitors will be required to wear face coverings when entering the retail shops, in line with Scottish Government guidance. The cafés on site will be open to visitors, providing a take-away offer. Visitors to Edinburgh Castle can also enjoy tea, coffee and snacks from the Red Food Truck on the esplanade.

Alex Paterson, Chief Executive of HES, said: “Edinburgh Castle is an internationally renowned symbol of Scotland, and its reopening is an important milestone not only for our organisation, but for the country as a whole as we continue on our journey to recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic.

“It has taken a significant amount of planning to reach this point, and I’m very proud of the efforts of all of our staff who have been instrumental in making these sites ready to safely welcome visitors once again.

“I’d also like to thank visitors for their patience throughout this period of uncertainty, and offer reassurance that the safety and quality of their visitor experience has been at the

forefront of our preparations.

“The tourism sector will be central to Scotland’s national recovery, and our historic attractions are a key part of that tourism offering. We’re also encouraging people across Scotland to visit historic sites in their local area and rediscover the rich history on their doorstep.

“We’ve already enabled access to over 200 of our unstaffed and key keeper sites across the country, and with our top three most-visited attractions set to open this weekend, we are now working to reopen a further 23 ticketed sites on a rolling basis throughout August and in to mid-September to offer access across Scotland to the heritage sites in our care.”







Photos Rob McDougall