Coronavirus – Gate 55 becomes walk through testing centre

On Saturday, the Gate 55 community hub became the latest walk-through Covid-19 testing centre, provided by the UK Government.

This site is designed to be easily accessible to anyone without a car, and is operated by Mitie. Anyone attending an appointment will be provided with guidance on getting to and from the centre safely, with additional support for vulnerable groups and people with disabilities.

Tests must be booked in advance at www.nhsinform.scot/test-and-protect or by calling 0800 028 2816. People should only book a test if they have coronavirus symptoms (a high temperature, a new and continuous cough, or a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste).

UK Government Minister for Scotland, Iain Stewart, said:"The UK Government is helping all parts of the UK fight the coronavirus pandemic

"Testing is vital, helping to manage local outbreaks and protecting people's livelihoods. The UK Government is providing the bulk of Covid testing in Scotland, and this new walk-through centre, is just the latest in our extensive testing network.

"We are pleased to be working with local and commercial partners. These sites are not possible without the hard work of many people. I would like to thank everyone involved for their incredible efforts for the good of the country at this

difficult time."

Adam McVey, Council Leader, said: "Keeping Edinburgh's residents safe remains our top priority and the best way to do that is by encouraging people to follow the latest guidance and get tested if they have any Covid-19 symptoms. We're already playing our part by providing the Government with staff support and access to the Usher Hall for testing, which has been going really well. It's helping hundreds of people every week to get tested so I'm pleased that we're now building on this by opening up our community hub at Gate 55. Well-known and well-placed for all West Edinburgh residents, it's an ideal site to offer easy access to testing. It will prove particularly useful for those in our community who don't have private transport and for nearby students, if they're feeling unwell."

Cammy Day, Depute Leader, said:"The Usher Hall site has been fantastic and many students and local people are finding it easy to walk or cycle in to get checked. It isn't handy for everyone though – particularly those in the West of the city. The new option of visiting Gate 55 will provide more choice and a familiar and accessible place for people in Sighthill and Westerhailes. I urge anyone with symptoms to follow the guidance and make sure they get checked out."

The Gate 55 testing site is open now between 8:00am and 8:00pm and is at 55 Sighthill Road, Edinburgh. Those being tested will be required to follow public health measures, including social distancing, not travelling by taxi or public transport, practising good personal hygiene and wearing a face covering throughout, including while travelling to and from the testing centre.

Anyone who tests positive will be contacted by contact tracers to help people to identify who they may have been in close contact with and protect others from further transmission. Close contacts of those testing positive will also hear from

contact tracers, asking them to stay at home for 14 days to prevent them from unknowingly spreading the virus. They will be advised to also book at test if they develop symptoms.