

Coronavirus testing facility opens at Royal Mint

A new walk-through coronavirus testing facility has opened for people with symptoms to book appointments at the Royal Mint's Visitor Centre Car Park as part of the UK Government's drive to continue to improve the accessibility of coronavirus testing for local communities.

Testing at the new site, in Llantrisant, Rhondda Cynon Taf, started on Thursday 28 January with appointments made available each day.

The site is part of the largest network of diagnostic testing facilities created in British history which has the capacity to process more than 700,000 tests a day and includes more than 800 sites across the UK. In Wales, this includes 10 drive-through sites, 20 walk through sites, 22 mobile units, plus the Newport Lighthouse Lab which is working round the clock to process samples.

In March, prior to the setting up of the new testing centre in its car park, the Royal Mint transformed its visitor centre into an emergency production line – making 1.9 million medical visors for the NHS.

Before the new testing facility opened on Thursday afternoon, Welsh Secretary Simon Hart visited the site to thank staff and to learn about how UK Government testing facilities are rolled out at speed in communities.

Welsh Secretary Simon Hart said:

The network of testing centres set up across the length and breadth of Wales by the UK Government and its partners is truly impressive.

It was fantastic to see the work that goes into setting up these facilities at speed and the dedication of the people who operate them.

Along with the rollout of vaccines, easily accessible testing is vital as we continue to combat the virus. Walk-through centres, like the one in Llantrisant, are crucial in this effort.

Testing at the new Llantrisant site is only available for those with coronavirus symptoms – a high temperature, a new continuous cough, or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste. Anyone with one or more of these symptoms should book a test at nhs.uk/coronavirus or by calling 119.

The testing centre is being operated in partnership with Mitie and will offer self-administered tests.

Simon Venn, Mitie Chief Government & Strategy Officer, said:

Our priority during the pandemic is to support efforts to fight COVID-19 and help keep the country running. Testing is a critical part of the UK's strategy to combat coronavirus and we're proud to support the UK Government with this vital task.

A big thank you to all the NHS staff, Mitie employees and other frontline heroes in Llantrisant, who are working tirelessly to keep us all safe.