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COVID-19 – Framework for Decision Making

# Scotland's route map through and out of the crisis

Phase 3 Update – 20 August 2020

# Introduction

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Scotland moved into Phase 3 of the Route Map after the 9th July review point because it was safe to do so. The evidence showed that the conditions for moving into Phase 3 and beginning further changes to lockdown restrictions had been met. This achievement reflected the collective effort of people and organisations across Scotland complying with lockdown rules and restrictions, and the unstinting efforts of our NHS and partner organisations in tackling the epidemic. On this sound basis, with the virus suppressed, several significant changes to restrictions were made, including the re-opening of indoor hospitality, wider retail and the tourism sector.

At the following three-week review, on 30th July, the evidence again showed that it was safe to proceed with some further re-opening of our economy and society. We adopted a cautious approach, placing our focus on safely pausing shielding and then fully re-opening our schools. Other changes were held back until later in the phase and given indicative dates that would be subject to confirmation, depending on continuing progress in suppressing the virus.

There have been a number of important developments in the epidemic since the 30th July review point. Several of the key indicators in Scotland including confirmed COVID-related deaths, hospital admissions and use of intensive care units (ICU) have remained very low. However, confirmed

positive case numbers have risen to an average of around 40-50 per day, having averaged around 10-20 a day for most of July, driven largely but not only by the outbreak that we have seen in and around Aberdeen.

The outbreak in Aberdeen has reminded us all how easily the virus can spread. We need to do everything we can to stop it in its tracks. That's why we have taken such decisive action in Aberdeen and we are grateful to the people of Aberdeen for their continued understanding and compliance with the rules which, alongside the exemplary Test & Protect work and outbreak management of the NHS and our partners, has now seen infection numbers fall. More generally, we should not be surprised by such outbreaks but we should seek to prevent them through following the relevant rules and advice, including following FACTS at all times. Where outbreaks do occur, we will seek to contain them, including through Test & Protect and through effective joint-working with partners on local outbreak management.

Our most recent estimates for the reproduction number (R) suggest that it could currently be close to or even above one. If the actual R number moves above one this could mean that the virus is spreading again. However, we know that the R number becomes less useful as a national indicator of the status of the epidemic when the prevalence of the virus becomes very

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low at the national level – as it is in Scotland at present. In such circumstances, the R number will be heavily influenced by local or regional outbreaks. However, the potential for R to be close to or above one reminds us how easy it would be for the virus to start spreading rapidly again in Scotland if we do not collectively take the appropriate measures to curb transmission.

Looking at developments elsewhere in the UK and internationally, the period since the 30th July review has seen significant increases in the number of infections in many countries. These increases are shown for a range of European countries in **Figure 1**. Such increases have not yet been mirrored by commensurate increases in hospital admissions and deaths, as the virus now seems to be spreading more quickly among young people. However, when prevalence among young people rises significantly then there is a risk of the virus spreading from young people to other, more vulnerable sections of the population. Beyond Europe, we continue to see the virus spreading rapidly in many parts of the world.

This deteriorating situation beyond our borders matters because we face the clear risk of importing the virus into our country and seeding new outbreaks. This helps to explain why we have taken, along with our four nations partners, difficult but necessary decisions about removing certain countries from our exemption

list, meaning that people arriving from those countries must quarantine for 14 days. While we recognise the inconvenience this causes, this is an important public health measure to keep our communities safe. As with the requirement to self-isolate and other rules like those on social gatherings, when people break these rules, they may not feel the direct effects themselves, but they may ultimately cause others, including loved ones, acquaintances and strangers, to fall gravely ill and even to die. We can only effectively control the virus if each and every one of us follows the rules.

In our current assessment of the status of the pandemic, we judge that we do not yet meet the criteria for progressing to Phase 4 of our Route Map, in which the virus will cease to be a significant threat to public health in Scotland. Beyond the planned changes to the restrictions set out in this publication, the Scottish Government considers that the remaining coronavirus regulations remain necessary to protect public health.

Given the developing status of the epidemic – both in Scotland and internationally – the Scottish Government has decided to continue to take a cautious approach at this review point. This includes strengthening some of the measures that are designed to keep us all safe.

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As we have taken decisions about what sectors and activities to re-open on our route out of lockdown, we have been guided by the principles set out in our *Framework for Decision Making*. In particular we have sought to reduce broader health, economic and societal harm, whilst remaining focussed on the necessity of suppressing the virus. This has led to some difficult timing decisions about how best to balance the various harms. We understand how difficult this situation is for those sectors and activities that are still waiting for the date when they can resume. Such decisions are necessarily more complex than simply comparing the viral transmission risk of one sector or setting with another, as broader economic and social impacts and interdependencies are also taken into account.

To help those businesses affected by the crisis, we have made over £2.3 billion of support available and have plans in place to support broader sustainable economic recovery, following advice from both the Advisory Group on Economic Recovery and the Enterprise & Skills Strategic Board. In addition, we believe it imperative that the UK Government continue to provide furlough and broader support for sectors affected by the ongoing crisis and do not withdraw support too soon.

The changes in this review period set out today will be introduced on 24th August and 31st August, with a further set of proposed changes given

an indicative date of 14th September, subject to confirmation at the next review point of 10th September. (Where a locality or region is subject to localised restrictions, not all of these changes will apply.)

On 24th August we will see the resumption of driving lessons, as well as the resumption of some small outdoor live events. Face-to-face advice services such as those provided by Citizens Advice are also able to reopen on this date. We are also able to confirm this date for the reopening of activities such as bingo halls, amusement arcades, casinos, indoor bowling and snooker halls – all with appropriate guidance in place. Funfairs will also be able to resume. These will represent welcome changes for many people, but such positive changes can only be maintained if we all adhere to the relevant guidance.

At the last review we also said that we would consider whether it would be feasible to bring forward some changes including re-opening gyms and swimming pools given their clear importance for our health and well-being. We now plan to bring forward the date for the resumption of these settings from 14th September to 31st August. We also said that we would consider re-opening indoor sports facilities for use by children for all activities. These can now open from the same date and may also be used by adults and young people for non-contact sports, following guidance.

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Finally, we are able to offer the indicative restart date of 14th September for a range of settings and activities, including indoor entertainment venues such as theatres (with restricted capacity), the limited reopening of stadia (with restricted numbers), a wider range of outdoor events such as concerts with standing audiences and the resumption of indoor contact sports for adults and young people – all subject to appropriate guidance. It must be stressed that this indicative date is conditional on continued progress in suppressing the virus. If the epidemic in Scotland deteriorates before this date then the expectation must be that the date will be delayed.

Many of our international partners are finding that they are reaching the limit of relaxing restrictions without risking a resurgence of the epidemic; several are now tightening restrictions. In Scotland we will face similar challenges over the weeks and months ahead. We have been consistently clear that we are seeking to create the conditions for a sustained recovery in our economy and broader society through continued suppression of the virus. As we have carefully and gradually re-opened sectors and activities, this has inevitably increased opportunities for the virus to spread. We too may reach our limit in Scotland, and that limit may come much sooner if our compliance falters.

As the international pandemic situation changes and as compliance and other factors adjust over time,

we must consider whether we need to adjust certain measures or restrictions in order to better suppress the virus, while alleviating its broader harms. We need to protect the ability of our schools to provide a full-time education for our children. We need to maintain a safe environment in which businesses can operate, jobs can be protected and livelihoods can be maintained. This cannot happen unless we collectively comply with the rules and measures that remain in place to keep ourselves and others safe.

In recent weeks we have seen how the virus can exploit weaknesses in our compliance and how quickly it can then take hold. It is clear that a common factor in many outbreaks of the virus is indoor hospitality and social gatherings indoors. We have had to re-impose local restrictions in Aberdeen, and may need to do the same in other places across Scotland in response to future outbreaks. To help us to avoid the need for this, we intend to introduce some additional, enforceable regulations that will address some of the most significant transmission risks that have been a factor in recent outbreaks.

To help our hospitality sector to remain open while doing everything we can to prevent future outbreaks we have already made it mandatory for a range of settings, including hospitality businesses, to collect customer details and introduced statutory guidance for the hospitality sector to improve safety.

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Looking forward, we plan to regulate to give the police powers to break up and disperse house parties held in breach of the regulations and to empower local authorities to take action to deal with poor compliance in some licensed premises, particularly pubs and bars. In doing so, we are seeking to maintain the conditions for further, sustainable recovery for our people, schools and businesses.

All of the changes that we have announced to date on our route out of lockdown require strong compliance with ongoing rules and advice - including specific sectoral guidance and general adherence to the FACTS. Over recent weeks we have seen what can happen if we do not continue to remain vigilant to the public health advice in place. If we all continue collectively to comply with the rules, then our prospects for continuing to suppress the virus, alleviating the broader harms of the crisis, and returning closer to normality remain positive.

**Scottish Government**

**20 August 2020**

## Remember **FACTS** for a safer Scotland

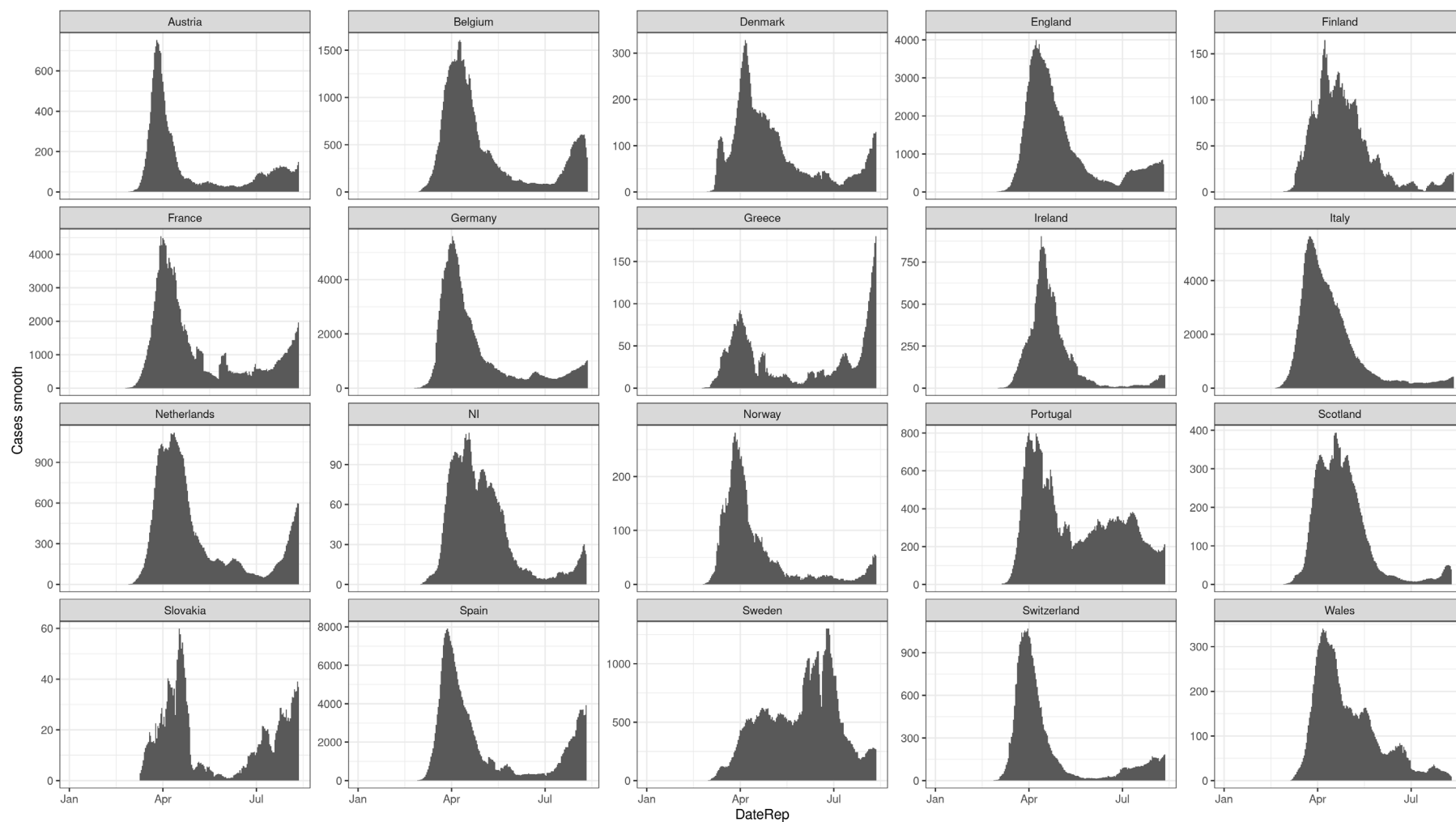
<b>F</b>	<b>Face coverings</b>	
<b>A</b>	<b>Avoid crowded places</b>	
<b>C</b>	<b>Clean your hands regularly</b>	
<b>T</b>	<b>Two metre distance</b>	
<b>S</b>	<b>Self isolate and book a test if you have symptoms</b>	

[nhsinform.scot/coronavirus](https://nhsinform.scot/coronavirus)

#WeAreScotland



**Figure 1:**  
Covid-19 cases



**Sources:**

ECDC for non UK countries: <https://opendata.ecdc.europa.eu/covid19/casedistribution/csv>

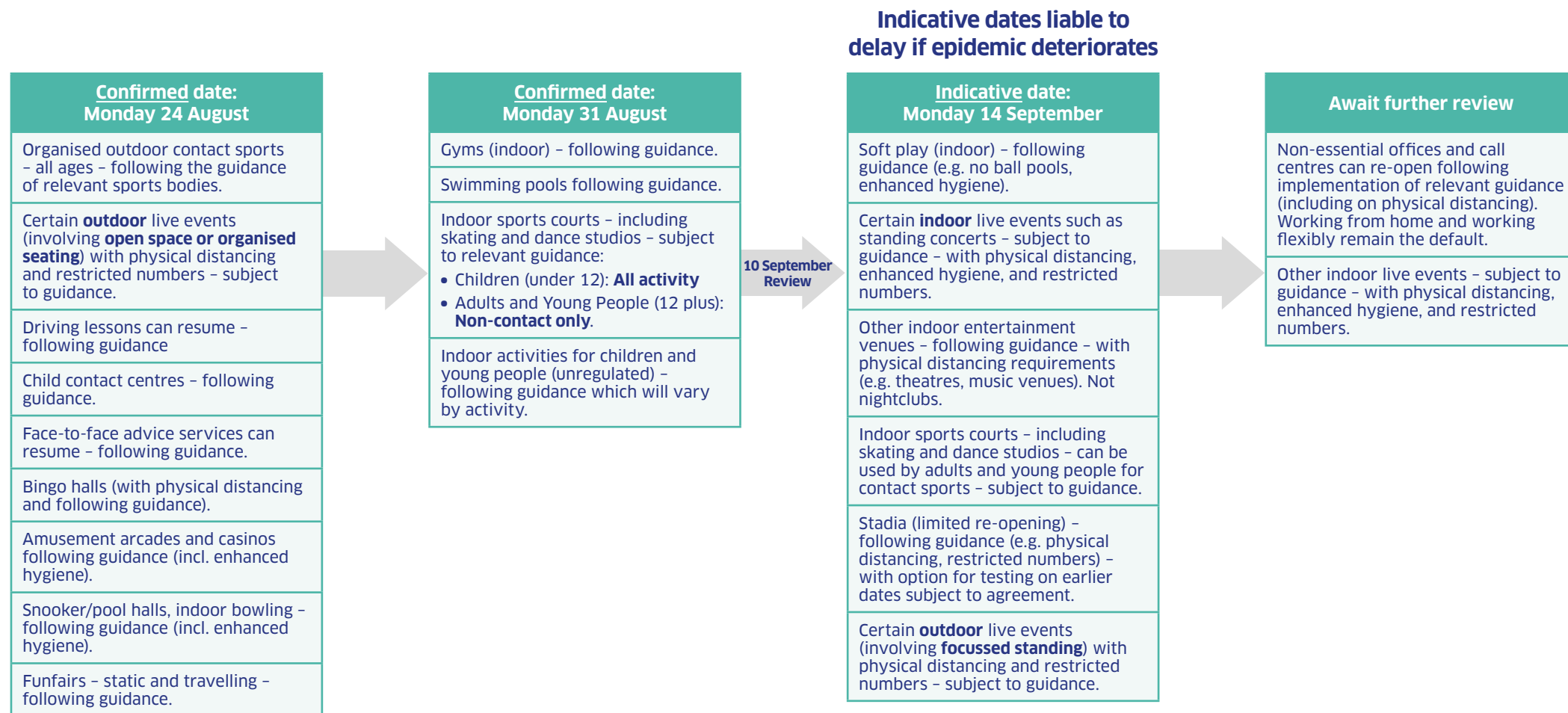
England: <https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/>

Scotland: <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/vital-events/general-publications/weekly-and-monthly-data-on-births-and-deaths/deaths-involving-coronavirus-covid-19-in-scotland>

Wales: <https://public.tableau.com/profile/public.health.wales.health.protection#!/vizhome/RapidCOVID-19virologyPublic/Headlinesummary>

Northern Ireland: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/daily-dashboard-updates-covid-19-august-2020>

**Guide to re-opening and scaling up over the remainder of Phase 3. Not all details are shown. Please refer to guidance and Q&A for more details. Relevant guidance and public health advice (such as physical distancing rules and enhanced hygiene measures) will apply to all changes shown below.**



**Public Services continue to scale up and re-open safely including NHS Mobilisation Plan**



# Outline of key dates

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**Note: all of the following changes are subject to relevant public health guidance.**

## The following are confirmed dates

### With effect from Monday 24 August

- Outdoor contact sports (all ages) can resume following guidance of relevant sports bodies.
- Outdoor seated live events and outdoor open space live events – with physical distancing, enhanced hygiene, and restricted numbers – following guidance. Work will be undertaken with the sector on options for larger pilot events.
- Driving lessons can resume – following guidance.
- Child contact centres can re-open following guidance.
- Face-to-face advice services, including Citizens Advice, can resume – following guidance.
- Bingo halls can re-open with physical distancing and following guidance.
- Amusement arcades and casinos can re-open following guidance (incl. enhanced hygiene).
- Snooker/pool halls and indoor bowling can re-open – following guidance (incl. enhanced hygiene).
- Funfairs – both static and travelling – can re-open, following guidance.

### With effect from Monday 31 August

- Gyms (indoor) can re-open – following guidance.
- Swimming pools can re-open – following guidance.
- Indoor sports courts can reopen – following guidance, incl. skating, dance studios: Children (0-12) years can resume all activity; adults and young people (12+) can resume non-contact activity only.
- Indoor activities for children and young people (unregulated) can resume subject to guidance that will vary by activity. Indoor youth work can resume for young people in line with guidance.

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### **The following are indicative dates only – conditional on 10 September review**

#### **With effect from Monday 14 September**

- Indoor soft play can re-open – following guidance (e.g. no ball pools, enhanced hygiene).
- Certain indoor live events such as standing concerts – with physical distancing, enhanced hygiene, and restricted numbers – following guidance. Work will be undertaken with the sector on options for pilot events.
- Other indoor entertainment venues – following guidance with physical distancing requirements (e.g. theatres, live music venues). Not nightclubs.
- Indoor sports courts- including skating and dance studios – can be used by adults and young people (12+) for contact sports – subject to guidance.
- Stadia – limited re-opening – following guidance (e.g. physical distancing, restricted numbers) – with option for testing on earlier dates subject to agreement with government.
- Outdoor focussed standing live events – with physical distancing, enhanced hygiene, and restricted numbers – following guidance. Work will be undertaken with the sector on options for larger pilot events.

### **The following have not yet been set a date and should await further review**

- Non-essential offices and call centres can re-open following implementation of relevant guidance (including on physical distancing). Working from home and working flexibly remain the default.
- Remaining indoor live events- with physical distancing, enhanced hygiene, and restricted numbers – following guidance. Work will be undertaken with the sector on options for pilot events.

#### **Scaling up of public services**

During Phase 3, a range of public services will continue to safely re-open and expand.

Public transport is scaling up to full services during Phase 3 with a move to 1 metre physical distancing, subject to appropriate risk mitigations, releasing further capacity in vehicles and vessels.

#### **Scaling-up health and social care across Phase 3**

Services will continue to scale up in line with NHS remobilisation plans.

#### **Measuring the impact of changes**

The *Equality and Fairer Scotland Impact Assessment (EQFSIA)* covering the Route Map is published and will be updated as we progress through the remaining Phases. We will publish other relevant impact assessments in due course.



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