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# Scotland 'not far away' from eliminating coronavirus

🕒 26 June 2020



REUTERS

The first minister wore a face mask during a visit to a shop in Edinburgh ahead of its reopening on Monday

**Scotland is "not far away" from eliminating coronavirus, the country's first minister has predicted.**

Nicola Sturgeon was speaking as she announced there have been no deaths from confirmed cases of the virus in the past 24 hours.

This was the first time the figure had been zero on a weekday since 20 March.

Ms Sturgeon said the statistic was "really significant" and a further sign of the progress that has been made.

But she again warned against complacency because the virus "has not yet gone away" and is "on the rise again" in some other countries.

- **Coronavirus in Scotland - latest updates**
- **Police clear large crowds from city park**
- **Which lockdown rules will change next - and when?**

Ms Sturgeon said: "Suppressing the virus, driving it as far as we can towards total elimination, has to be our overriding priority.

"We have made exceptional progress over the past three months, and the figures today highlight that.

"But it has only been possible because the vast majority of us have stuck to the rules."

The first minister stressed that elimination was different from eradication, and was about "getting it to the lowest possible levels we can in a country".

She added: "It doesn't mean it has gone away, it doesn't mean it won't rise again if we stop doing the things we need to do, but it gives us more confidence that we can keep it under control.

"I think we are not that far away from that. The challenge is keeping it there."



PA MEDIA

Many shops, businesses and visitor attractions are preparing to reopen in the coming weeks - including Blair Drummond Safari Park near Stirling

The number of cases of coronavirus in Scotland has fallen dramatically in recent weeks, with the number of people testing positive in single figures on some days.

There are currently only 17 coronavirus patients in the country's intensive care units.

And Ms Sturgeon said the percentage of people who tested positive for the virus was now well below 1% - and was just 0.3% on Thursday.

But with the country's three-month lockdown due to be eased significantly over the coming weeks, she urged people not to become complacent of the threat caused by the virus which has been linked to the deaths of more than 4,100 people in Scotland.

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## What will reopen in Scotland and when?





29 June - Most non-essential shops, many indoor workplaces, visitor attractions including zoos, outdoor sports courts and playgrounds

3 July - Five mile travel distance relaxed, most self-catering holiday homes and second homes can be used

6 July - Outdoor hospitality such as beer gardens can reopen

10 July - People can meet in extended groups outdoors and with two other households indoors

13 July - Shopping centres can reopen, organised outdoor contact sports for children can resume, dentists can reopen for most routine care

15 July - Pubs, restaurants and all holiday accommodation can reopen, as can hairdressers, barbers, museums, cinemas, libraries and childcare

**[Read more about the lockdown easing timeline here](#)**

Ms Sturgeon pointed to a resurgence in cases in countries that are coming out of lockdown, such as Germany and the US, as a warning sign that "we ignore at our peril".

She added: "The virus has not gone away, and it will not go away of its own accord.

"A big concern for me is that, as we ease more restrictions, people drop their guard - it is perhaps human nature.

"And of course, the potential for that increases as people are out and about and seeing each other much more."

Police **dispersed large groups of people** from Kelvingrove Park as Scotland enjoyed the warmest day of the year so far on Thursday, while there were also big crowds at the Meadows in Edinburgh.

Ms Sturgeon said she understood people wanting to enjoy the sunshine, but she urged them to do so sensibly by avoiding crowded places and trying to find somewhere quieter.

## More about coronavirus



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