

JESMOND (EAST)

Making changes in your area to create safer, cleaner and greener neighbourhoods

Safer, Cleaner, and Greener – traffic changes in East Jesmond

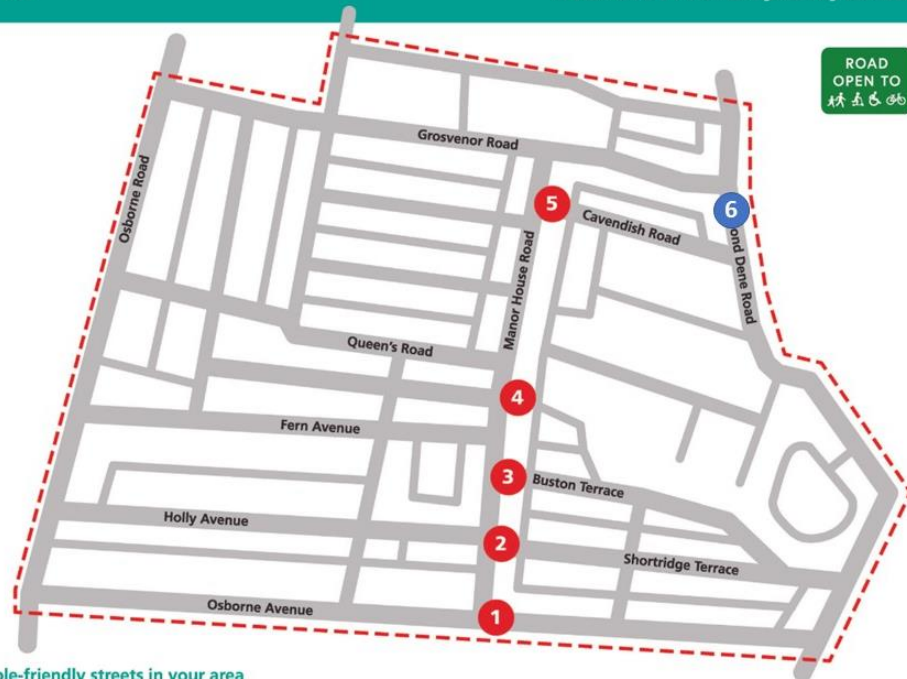
Interim Monitoring Note – June 2023

This note has been prepared to summarise some initial findings of the monitoring that is being undertaken following the launch of initial measures of the Safer, Cleaner and Greener Neighbourhood proposals in Jesmond that were introduced in March 2023.

Summary of the Scheme

The following measures, shown with red circles, have been brought forward via an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) dated 6 March 2023:

- Introduction of “Modal Filters” (i.e. stopping through vehicular traffic) on:
 1. Osborne Avenue at the junction with Manor House Road
 2. Shortridge Terrace at the junction with Manor House Road
 3. Buston Terrace at the junction with Manor House Road
 4. Back Lane Manor House Road at the entrance opposite the back lane of Queens Road and Fern Avenue.
 5. Cavendish Road at the junction with Manor House Road.



Following a significant increase in traffic after the measures were implemented, Jesmond Dene Road, south of its junction with Grosvenor Road was closed via an emergency notice on the 31 March 2023 (shown as closure 6 above). Separately, Akenside Terrace at its junction with Jesmond Road was also closed at this time. A Temporary Traffic Regulation Order came into operation on the 21 April 2023 for a period of 18 months for each of these closures. Should a decision be taken to make these temporary measures permanent, this would need to be implemented with a permanent Traffic Regulation Order and be subject to consultation and a statutory objection period.

Frequently Asked Questions

A frequently asked questions (FAQs) document was published on the Commonplace site to help answer common queries regarding the trial.

<https://jesmondeasttrialsconsultation.commonplace.is/en-GB/news/new-frequently-asked-questions-document>

Aims and Objectives of the Scheme

In June 2021, the City Council's Cabinet endorsed a range of initiatives that the council propose to take forward in neighbourhoods across the city to help ensure that people, rather than motor traffic, take priority on our city's residential streets with the intention to make streets across the city more family friendly and suitable for children to play out on. The associated report can be read in full here - <https://democracy.newcastle.gov.uk/documents/s172247/Transport%20Changes%20Neighbourhoods.pdf>.

Arising out of this ambition, the Safer, Cleaner and Greener Neighbourhoods project aims to develop and implement plans to improve neighbourhoods across the city, aimed at reducing traffic on local streets. With less traffic cutting through, neighbourhood streets can become safer and more attractive places for the people who live there. These changes would give children more space to play and help to encourage more people to take up and use active modes of transport, such as walking and cycling, for more journeys.

For the Jesmond area specifically, the key aims for the proposals were Reduction of through traffic on local residential streets.

- Encourage vehicular traffic to utilise the identified main routes for vehicles around the area.
- Maintain vehicle access to all properties and destinations in the area despite the changes in routes.
- Introduce measures that will reduce / avoid the potential for traffic to divert onto nearby residential streets.
- Introduce measures to help people on foot to get around the area.
- To start a process of behaviour change towards the use of active modes of transport.
- Potentially help alleviate the impact of school traffic in the area.

A further Cabinet Paper in October 2022 set out the approach to delivering Low Traffic Neighbourhood Zones in the city - this paper sets out proposals for the areas where Low Traffic Neighbourhood Zones will be delivered in the city and the engagement, consultation and approval process that will be used. <https://democracy.newcastle.gov.uk/documents/s186029/October%20Transport%20Cabinet%20report.pdf>.

This approach to managing traffic in neighbourhoods will help to enable and promote the use of active and sustainable modes of transport for more journeys, in line with the City's Net Zero Action Plan which seeks to improve public health, air quality and support the local economy.

Monitoring

Several methods have been used to help establish data on travel patterns in and around the area, so that monitoring of the impact of the proposals can be carried out.

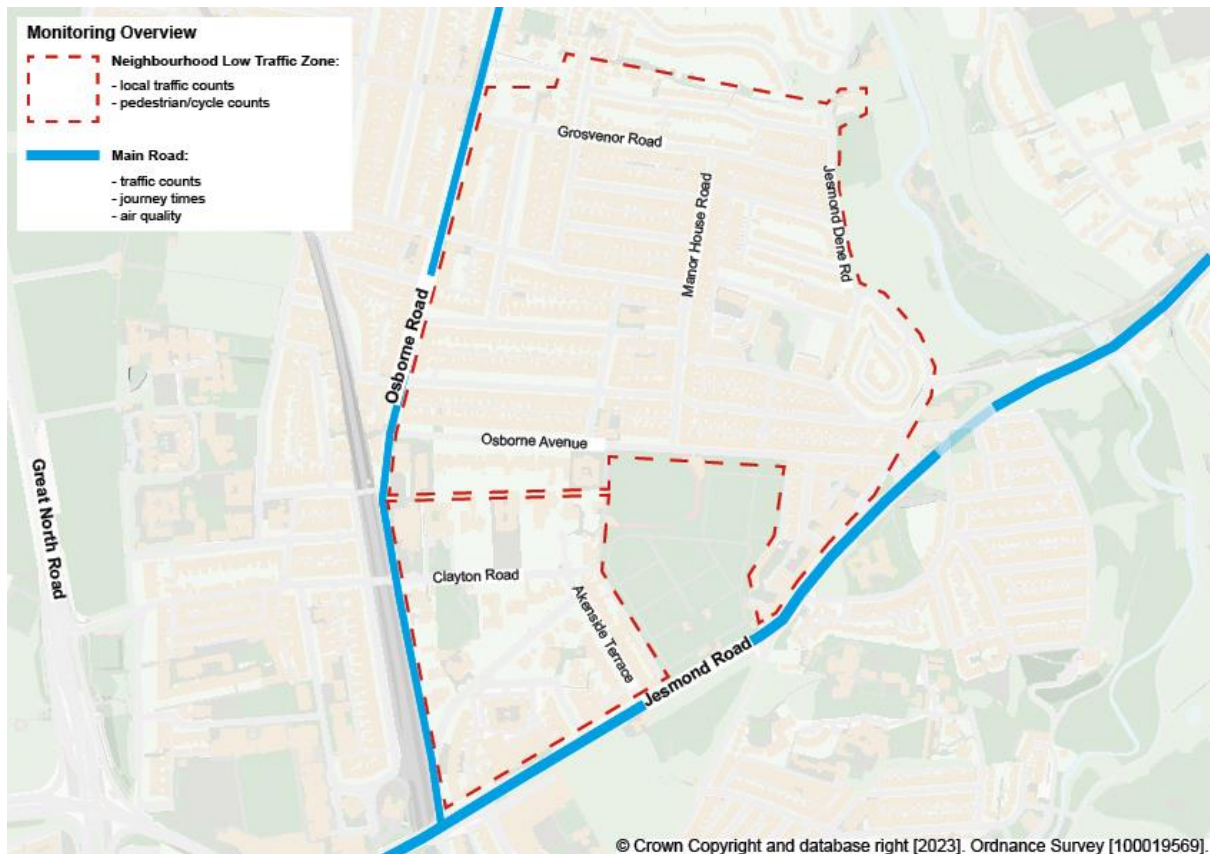
- Both Automated Traffic Counts (ATC) and Junction Turning Counts (JTCs) have been undertaken in a range of locations across the area. Counts have been collected in July 2021 (outside of school term time), September 2021 (when all schools were in term), March 2022, November 2022 and February 2023 to provide baseline data prior to implementation.
 - The map below shows the locations where traffic count monitoring surveys had been undertaken prior to the implementation of measures:



- Surveys have since been carried out following the scheme's introduction, to determine the impact of the measures and will continue to be repeated periodically over the duration of the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order.
- In addition to the above surveys, we can access data from cameras that record vehicles, bikes, and pedestrians in real time on a 24 hour a day at following locations:
 - Jesmond Dene Road at its junction with Benton Bank
 - Jesmond Dene Road at its junction with Grosvenor Road
 - Osborne Road at its junction with Grosvenor Road
 - Osborne Road south of its junction with Haldane Bridge
 - East of Armstrong Bridge close to Jesmond Park West

- The City Council also has access to other monitoring data such as that collected by the Traffic and Accident Data Unit (TADU) who collect data on behalf of the wider Tyne and Wear region. For this monitoring report, traffic counters located on Osborne Road and A1058 Coast Road have been utilised to assess wider traffic impact outside of the LTN zone area.

This potential impact is visualised in the map below:



Background

History of project - Timeline

Following the June 2021 Cabinet meeting and the creation of the Safer, Cleaner and Greener Neighbourhoods project:

- **Principles and concepts** (January 2022 - December 2022)
 - Gathering of thoughts, ideas and aspirations for the overall plan to inform design process.
 - Between May and October 2022, various discussions were held with Ward Councillors with regards to potential changes.
- **Pre-consultation on the individual proposals** (7 February 2023 - 19 February 2023)
 - Gathering of more detailed community reaction relating to elements of the proposals (see below for summary).
- **Trial measures installed - public consultation period** (6 March 2023 - 10 September 2023)
 - Gathering of feedback from stakeholders and monitoring of traffic and other mode patterns in the area.

Statutory consultation with emergency services

- Discussions with Fire, Police and Ambulance services also took place in September 2022 to establish emergency access requirements.
- Initial formal consultation with Statutory Consultees – took place in February 2023.
 - As part of the statutory consultation ahead of the scheme being implemented, all emergency services were consulted. The statutory consultation also includes key service providers including waste collection, taxi operators, bus operators etc.

Pre-consultation process and feedback

- A press release on the 7 February 2023 announced the proposals for a low traffic neighbourhood zone in part of Jesmond, east of Osborne Road. It was followed by the delivery of 3,250 leaflets outlining the proposed trial measures and inviting comments from residents and businesses before they were implemented on 6 March 2023.

- Feedback on the package of low traffic neighbourhood measures was submitted by email, telephone call, direct contact with councillors and the Commonplace online platform.
- 344 respondents made 803 posts on Commonplace, 116 emails were received and 20 phone calls.
- The most frequently raised issue in this period from both supporters and objectors to the trials, was about the anticipated impact of the closures on Grosvenor Road and Grosvenor Avenue and their unsuitability for through traffic – heavily parked on both sides, narrow, steep at the Dene end, family housing etc. Osborne Avenue was frequently cited as a more appropriate road for through traffic being wider, fewer houses with front gardens, and a more direct route from the Cradlewell to Osborne Road.
- Similarly, the access to the streets east of the proposed closures from Jesmond Road / Cradlewell bypass via Jesmond Dene Road was anticipated to be inappropriate given the narrowness, awkward give way near Armstrong Bridge, lack of pavements on stretches and its popularity with walkers and cyclists.
- Other common themes in the feedback included concerns about increasing traffic on the boundary roads, negative impacts on local businesses and calls for compromises over closures. Supporters anticipated that the proposals would encourage active travel making it safer and easier to walk and cycle, enhance quality of life in the area for families and children, and reducing pollution in residential streets.
- There were also criticisms of the consultation processes and calls for more evidence to support the decision to proceed with the trials.

Trial Period Actions:

- **6 March 2023** – Trial measures installed, and public consultation starts (6 March 2023 – 10 September 2023). Monitoring ongoing.
- **31 March 2023** - Due to a significant increase in traffic after the initial measures were implemented, Jesmond Dene Road south of its junction with Grosvenor Road was closed via an emergency notice. Akenside Terrace at its junction with Jesmond Road was also closed at this time.
 - Emergency services were notified of these changes. The Fire services were provided with keys to enable appliances to bypass the bollards and navigate through the area.

- A Temporary Traffic Regulation Order came into operation on the 21 April 2023 for a period of 18 months for these closures.
- **6 April 2023** – Additional air quality monitoring tubes installed on Osborne Road.
- **18 April 2023** - A frequently asked questions (FAQs) document was published on the Commonplace site to help answer common queries regarding the trial. <https://jesmondeasttrialsconsultation.commonplace.is/en-GB/news/new-frequently-asked-questions-document>
- **28 April 2023** – Additional cycle parking and planters installed at Cradlewell shops in coordination with local businesses.

We will continue to introduce modifications during the consultation period in response to emerging data and feedback. When and if we have a scheme that we think works for the area, we will collect 12 months of data before deciding to make the measures permanent.

Findings

Average weekday traffic flows on residential streets within LTN

Osborne Avenue and Fern Avenue

The measures have impacted vehicle counts on other streets within the area including Osborne Avenue and Fern Avenue which saw significant levels of through traffic previously. The visualisation below shows the impact of the measures:

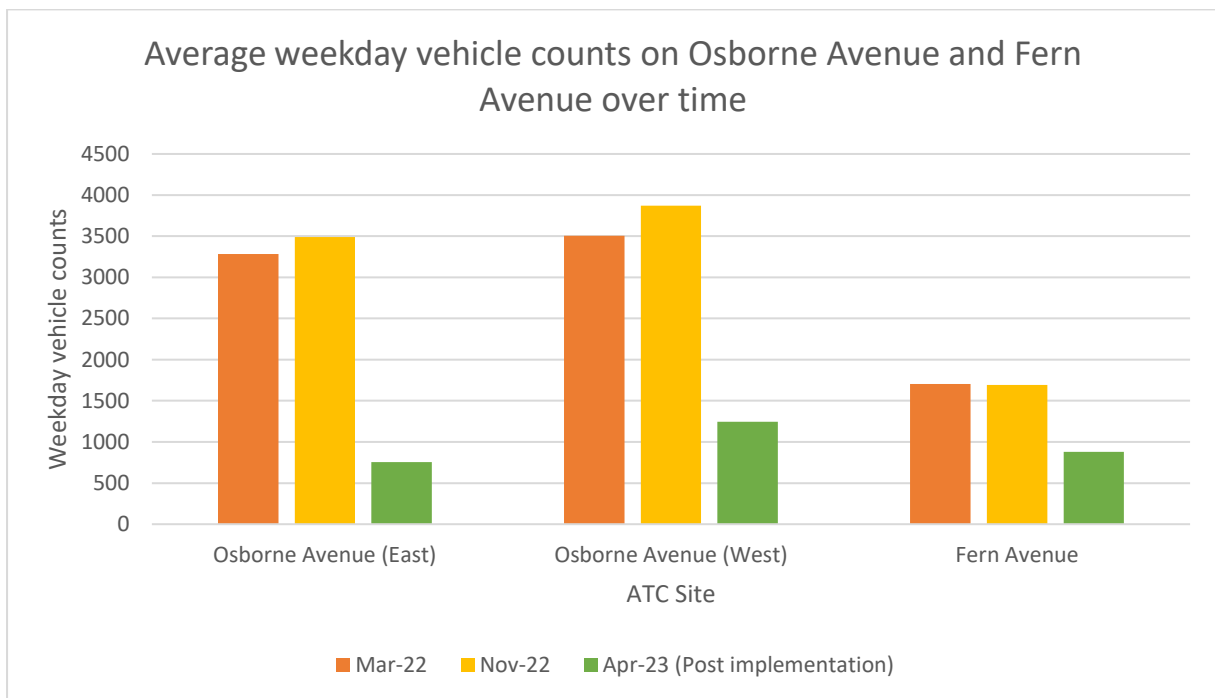


Figure 1 - Average weekday vehicle counts on Osborne Avenue and Fern Avenue over time. Osborne Avenue (E) refers to the area west of its junction with Deuchar Street. Osborne Avenue (W) refers to the area to the west of its junction with Gowan Terrace.

The visualisation highlights the significant reduction in vehicle counts on the streets with Osborne Avenue witnessing a decrease in over 2,500 vehicles a day when comparing November 2022 to April 2023. Similarly, Fern Avenue has seen a 48% decrease across the same periods.

Grosvenor Road and Jesmond Dene Road

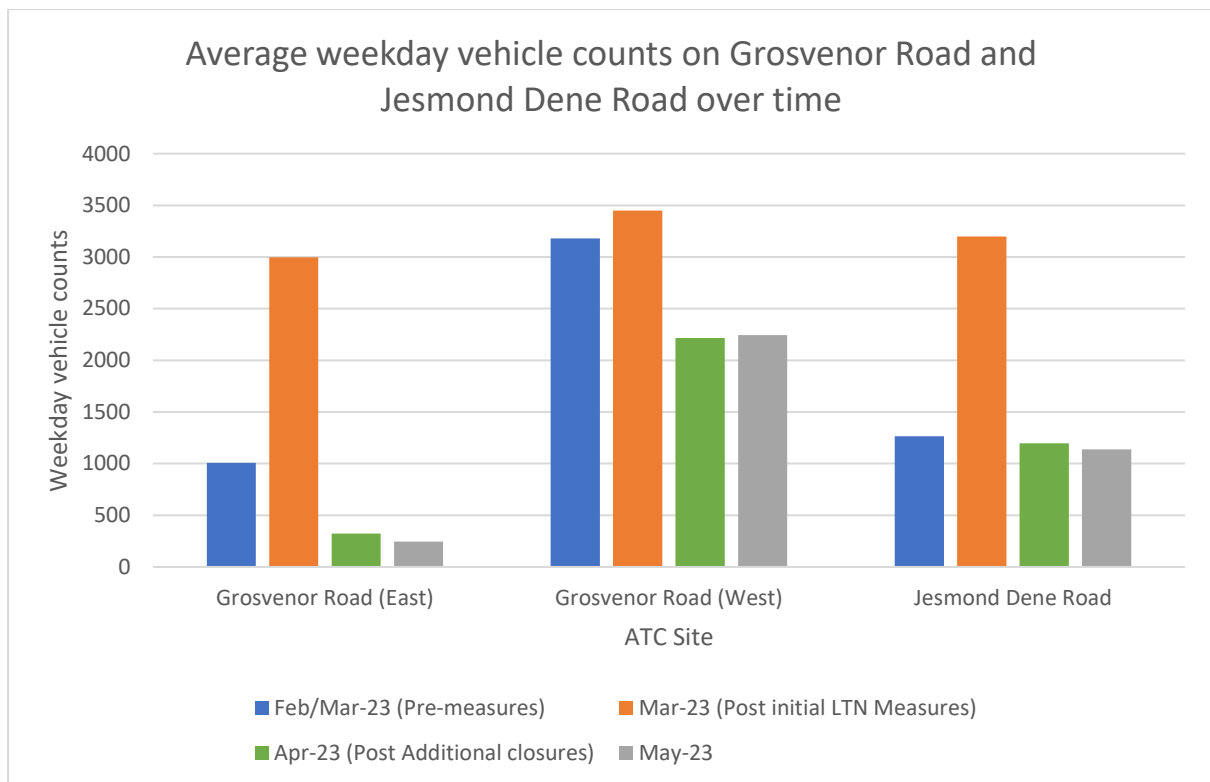


Figure 2 - Average weekday vehicle counts on Grosvenor Road and Jesmond Dene Road over time from February to May 2023. Grosvenor Road (East) refers to counts west of its junction with Jesmond Dene Road while "West" refers to the section close to the junction with Osborne Road. School holiday periods and bank holidays excluded.

The chart highlights an immediate increase in vehicle counts subsequent to the initial closures. This is most noticeable at the eastern section of Grosvenor Road and Jesmond Dene Road. With the implementation of the additional closure on Jesmond Dene Road, these figures decrease substantially in April and May.

Impact on boundary roads and those outside LTN

With the reduction of through traffic in the East Jesmond area, we can look to assess any impact this has had on boundary roads and the wider network.

A1058 Coast Road

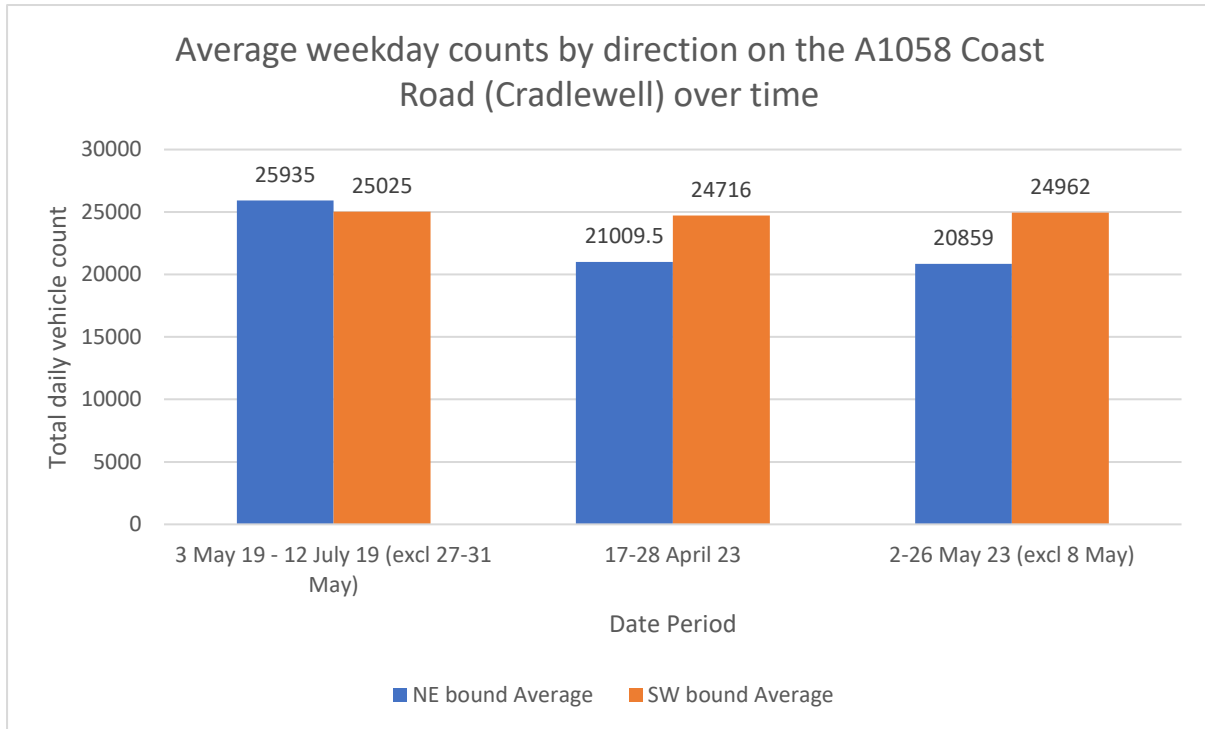


Figure 3 - Average weekday vehicle counts by direction on A1058 Coast Road over time from before and after implementation of measures. Traffic counts captured at the Cradlewell, NE of Deuchar Street, SW of Osborne Avenue. School holiday periods and bank holidays excluded.

The above figure compares average weekday vehicle counts on the A1058 Coast Road over time by direction. The chart shows how after the implementation of the Safe Jesmond measures the NE bound counts are over 18% lower than the pre-pandemic baseline in 2019. Whereas in the SW direction, similar counts are shown to that of the 2019 average.

Journey Time Data

Weekday journey time data can also be assessed to determine the impact of the measures. Weekly periods following the implementation of measures have been presented displaying the impact on journey times at different times over the day including peak hours. These periods are presented alongside a comparable pre-pandemic baseline period from 2019. The impact can be seen in visualisation below:

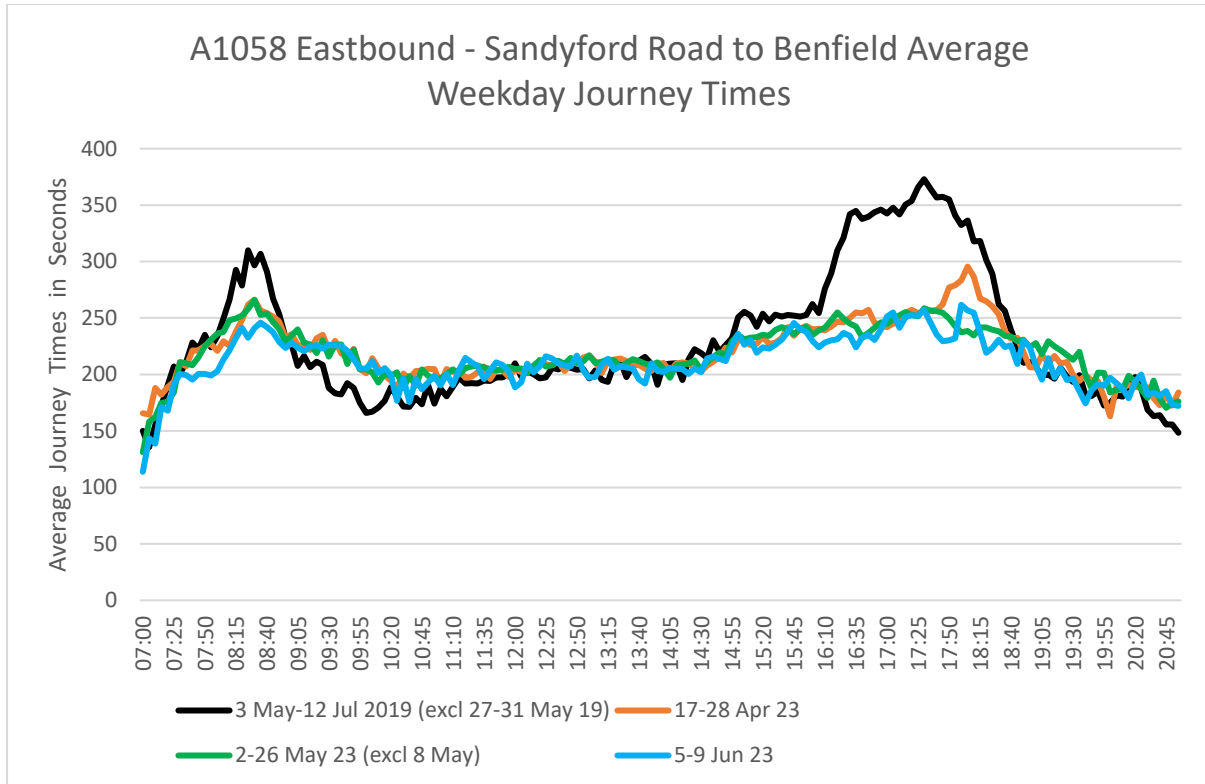


Figure 4 - Average weekday journey times on the A1058 Eastbound between Sandyford Road and Benfield Road. School holiday periods and bank holidays excluded.

The above visualisation compares journey time data on the A1058 from Sandyford Road to Benfield Road over time. The chart displays that between May and July 2019, the AM peak (8:00 – 8:50) journey time was just over 5 minutes whereas the PM peak (16:10 – 17:50), the journey time was just under 6 minutes. For May 2023, the average journey times were less than this with the AM peak averaging just over 4 minutes, with the PM peak comparably lower at 4 minutes also.

The impact for westbound direction is shown below:

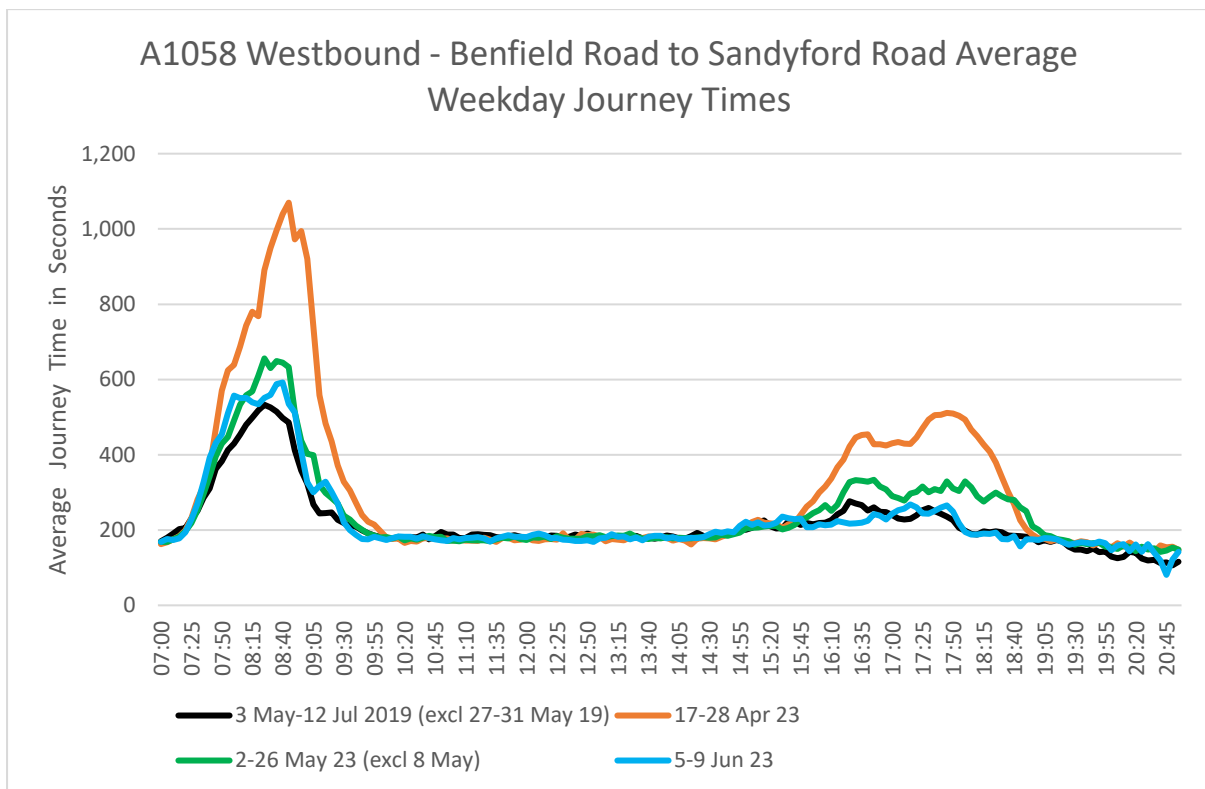


Figure 5 - Average weekday journey times on the A1058 Eastbound between Sandyford Road and Benfield Road. School holiday periods and bank holidays excluded.

This visualisation highlights the impact the measures have had on westbound journey times. Journey times were significantly higher in April 2023 shortly after the additional closures made on Jesmond Dene Road and Akenside Terrace. This was especially the case in the AM peak. However, the average in May 2023 displays that this trend has begun to decrease although journey times remain slightly higher than that of the baseline period.

*Journey times graphs for Benfield Road to Osborne Road as well as Osborne Road to Sandyford Road (both directions) can be found in Appendix 1.

Osborne Road

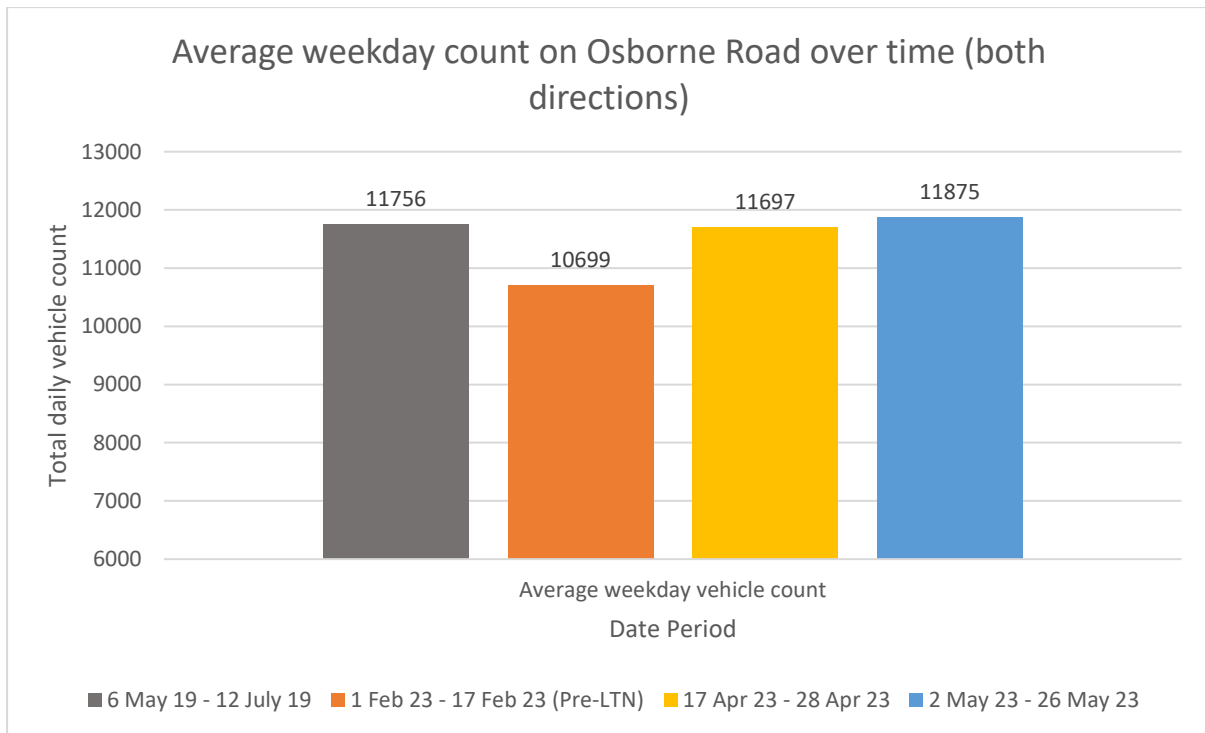


Figure 6 - Average weekday vehicle counts on Osborne Road over time comparing before and after implementation of measures. Traffic counts captured on Osborne Road south of junction with Osborne Avenue. School holiday periods and bank holidays excluded.

The above visualisation displays average weekday counts across date periods in recent months. Subsequent to the implementation of measures, an increase of around 1,000 vehicles daily can be seen utilising Osborne Road. Although, these figures are comparable to pre-pandemic figures seen in 2019.

Feedback from Go North-East, who operate the Q3 Quaylink service on Osborne Road, has confirmed that although traffic levels have increased, the service is not suffering from any major delays. Public transport options for the wider area have been provided in Appendix 2.

Akenside Terrace

The below visualisation highlights the impact on Akenside Terrace after the initial implementation of measures in East Jesmond:

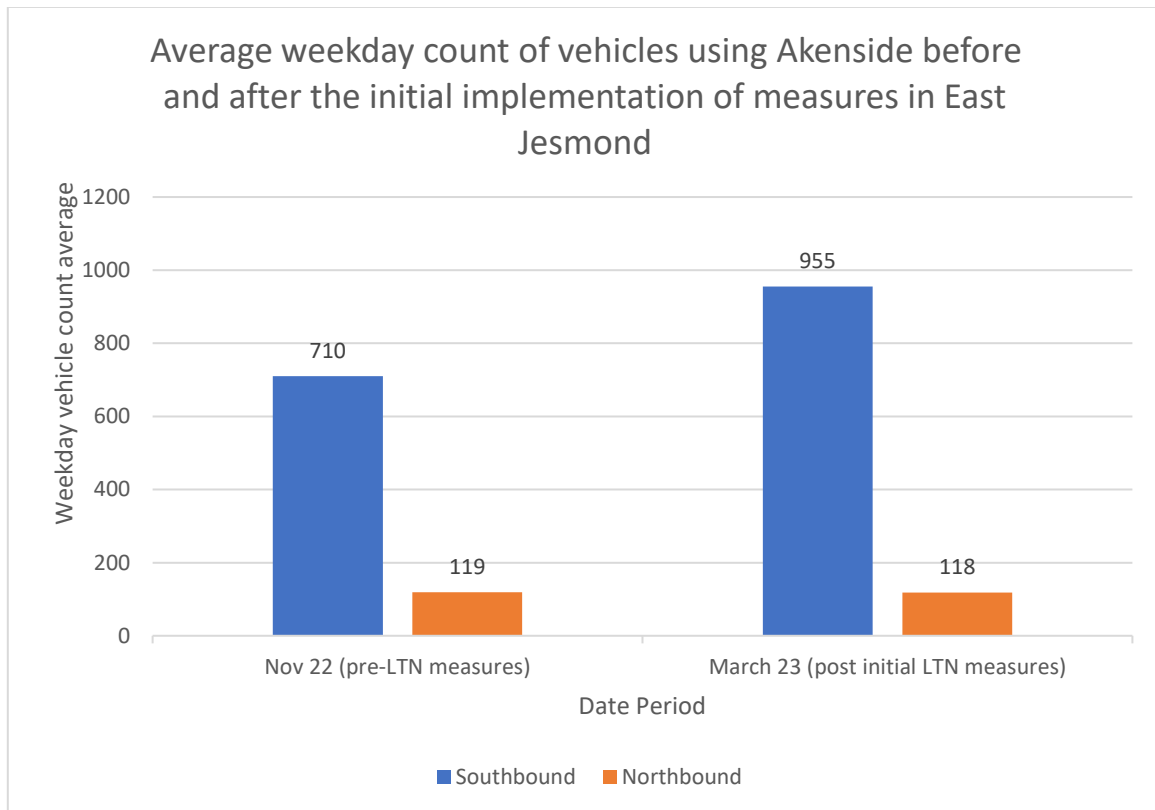


Figure 7 - Average weekday vehicle counts on Akenside Terrace comparing before and after implementation of LTN measures.

The above data would suggest that much of through traffic occurs in the south bound direction with drivers potentially attempting to skip the Osborne Road (southbound) queue by utilising Akenside Terrace as a route on to Coast Road. Significantly lower numbers are shown in the northbound direction. The reduced count in northbound traffic could be largely due to the banned right turn on the Coast Road (westbound) so drivers are less likely to bypass queuing in the opposite direction to the above.

In terms of impact subsequent to the initial measures in East Jesmond, there was a 29.4% increase in overall weekday traffic. The increase can solely be seen southbound direction with little to no change seen in the northbound direction. The closure of this route prevented a further increase in traffic subsequent to the closure of Jesmond Dene Road.

Granville Road

The below visualisation highlights the impact on vehicular traffic on Granville Road subsequent to the additional closures made on Jesmond Dene Road and Akenside Terrace.

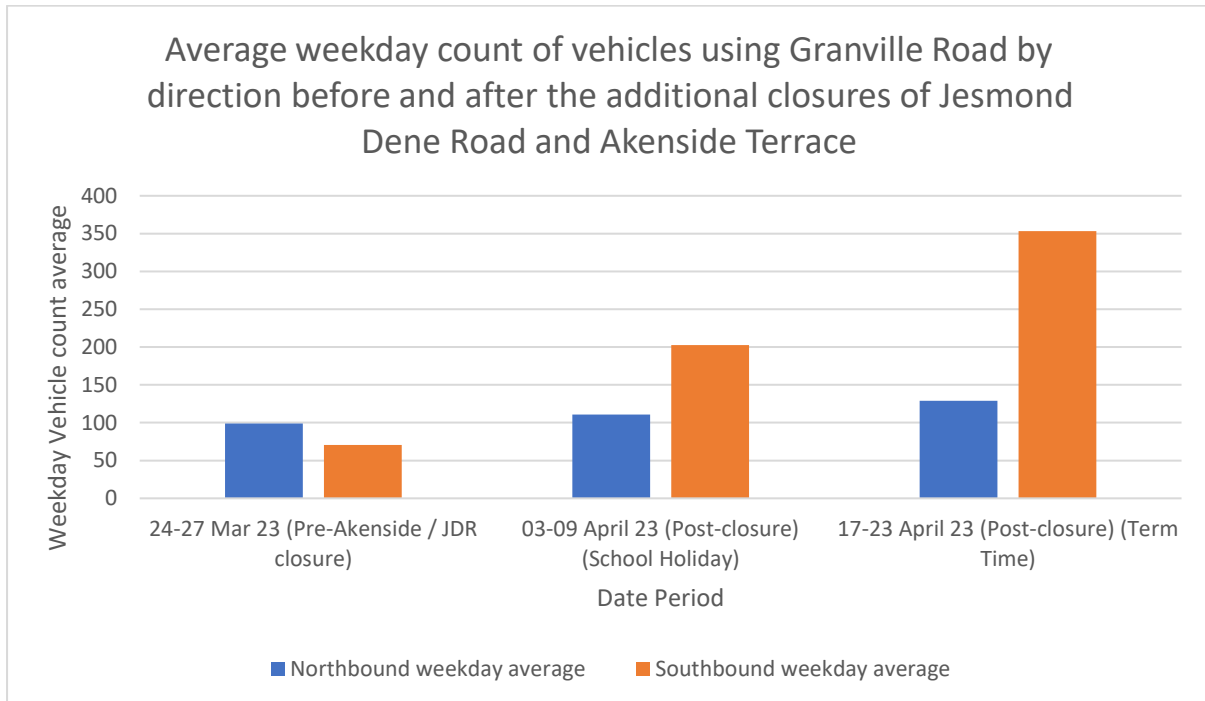


Figure 8 - Average weekday vehicle counts on Granville Road before and after implementation of the additional closures.

The chart shows a significant increase in the average vehicle counts particularly in the southbound direction. This can possibly be attributed to traffic looking to bypass waiting at the traffic lights on Osborne Road southbound towards the junction with Jesmond Road.

Air Quality

In April 2023, NCC placed air quality monitoring devices on Osborne Road; one opposite the entrance to Jesmond Nursery and the second close to the junction with Grosvenor Road. The monitoring devices provide a monthly result, which, when added to other monthly results taken across the year, provides an annual average figure for each site.

The pollutant of main concern is nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). The annual average limit for NO₂ is 40ug/m³. Above this figure the local authority is expected to act to reduce NO₂ levels below the limit, this being the premise behind Newcastle's Clean Air Zone.

The devices have been analysed by a laboratory which found that the NO₂ level for April opposite the Nursery was 34.6ug/m³ and the NO₂ level close to the junction with Grosvenor Road was 18ug/m³. Both sites therefore appear to be below the NO₂ limit. However, the above results are a snapshot and cannot be used in isolation to state whether either site complies or not with the NO₂ limit. To do this, further measurements are required which must then be adjusted against national averages. This then allows results from across the country to be compared with one another. NCC will therefore not know whether this site is below the NO₂ limit until June 2024 hence caution should be exercised when quoting this result.

NCC are continuing to monitor the sites and will make the monthly results available when possible.

Air quality data is also being collected at an automatic monitoring site on Jesmond Road, at the junction with Deuchar Street. This site collects live data which is available online at https://www.airqualityengland.co.uk/site/latest?site_id=NCA3. However, the data and values presented here is based on provisional data which is subject to review by the City Council and DEFRA.

Summaries of previous years' reviewed data can be found on the Newcastle City Council website: <https://newcastle.gov.uk/services/environment-and-waste/environmental-health-and-pollution/air-pollution/air-quality>.

Impact on walking and cycling

Monitoring of walking and cycling levels is continuing at the locations referenced earlier in this note. Experience from Newcastle and best practice elsewhere indicates it is generally over a longer time period that notable changes among these modes would be detected, and mode shift occurs.

It should also be noted that walking and cycling figures are also influenceable by external factors such as weather and local events (particularly the case for pedestrian figures). This should be acknowledged when reviewing changes over time.

By way of an example in the short term, an average daily total of 1,137 people on foot were counted on Jesmond Dene Road at its junction with Benton Bank from 1 April to 4 June 2023 compared to 903 in the week prior to the closure to motor vehicles being implemented. This can be seen over time:

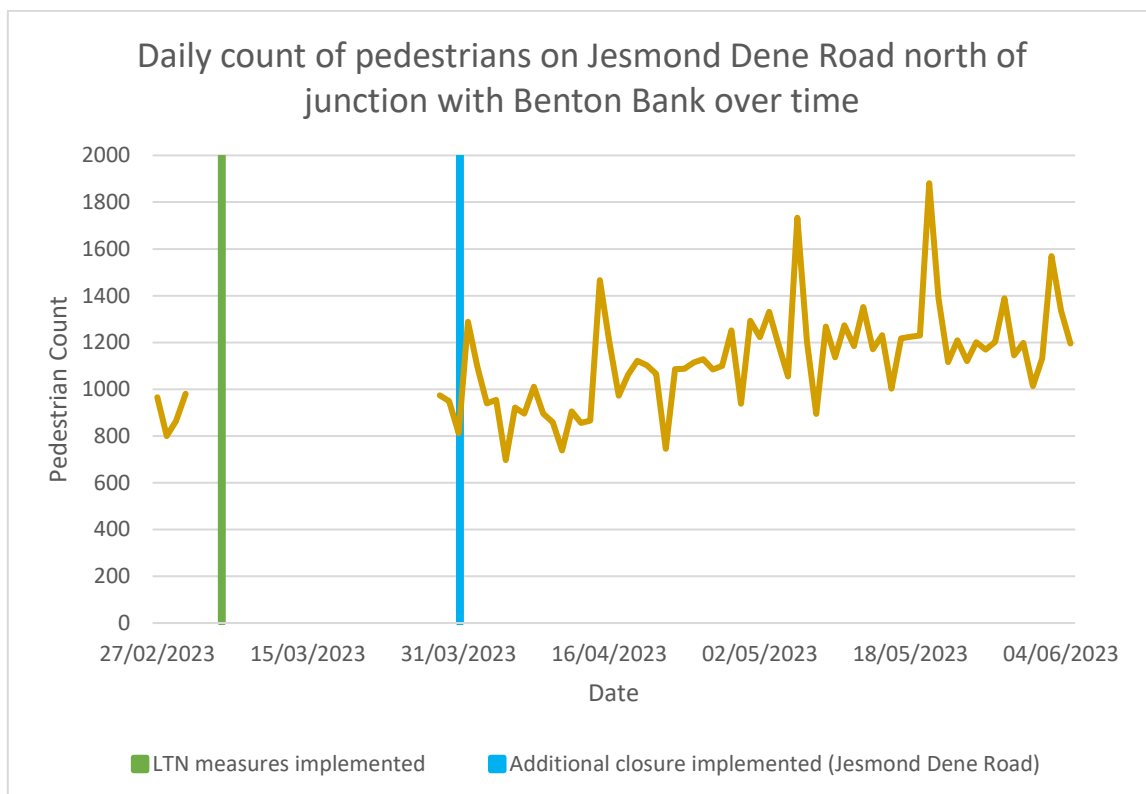


Figure 9 - Pedestrians counted daily on Jesmond Dene Road north of junction with Benton Bank over time. *Due to technical issues, the data in this format is not available between 03/03/23 and 29/03/23.

Pedestrian figures can also be assessed on Armstrong Bridge located close to the edge of the LTN zone area. Pedestrian counts can be seen over time below:

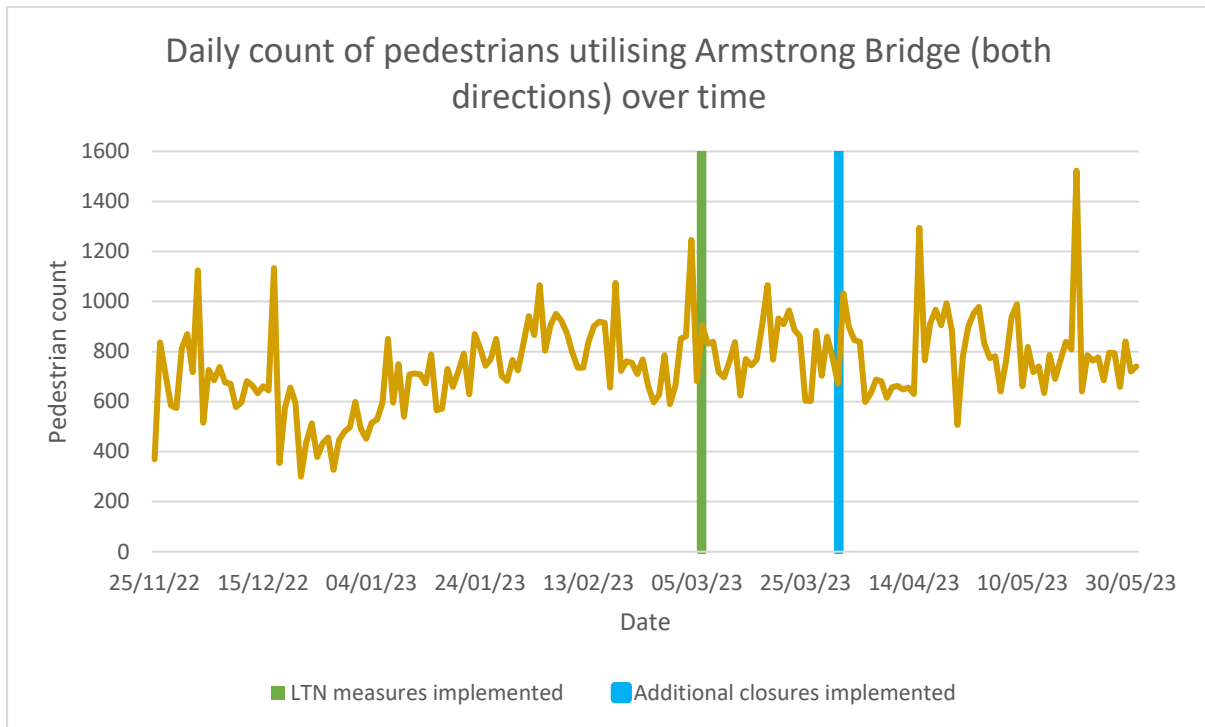


Figure 10 - Pedestrians counted daily on Armstrong Bridge west of Jesmond Park West over time from November 2022 to May 2023.

The above visualisation highlights how pedestrian usage of Armstrong Bridge gradually increased from the December months to remaining fairly level from February 2023 onwards. The peaks in the data correlate to the local Armstrong Bridge Market event which occur on Saturdays fortnightly.

The impact on pedal cyclist figures over time can also be seen below:

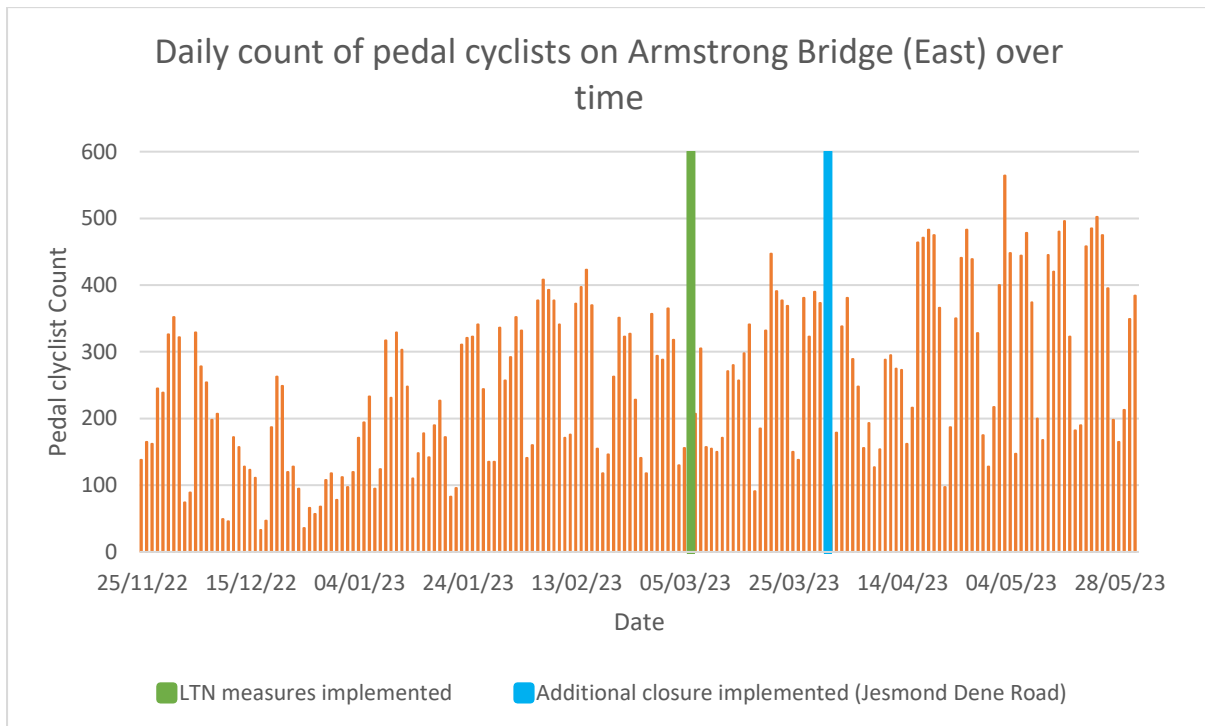


Figure 11 - Pedal cyclists counted daily on Armstrong Bridge west of Jesmond Park West over time from November 2022 to May 2023.

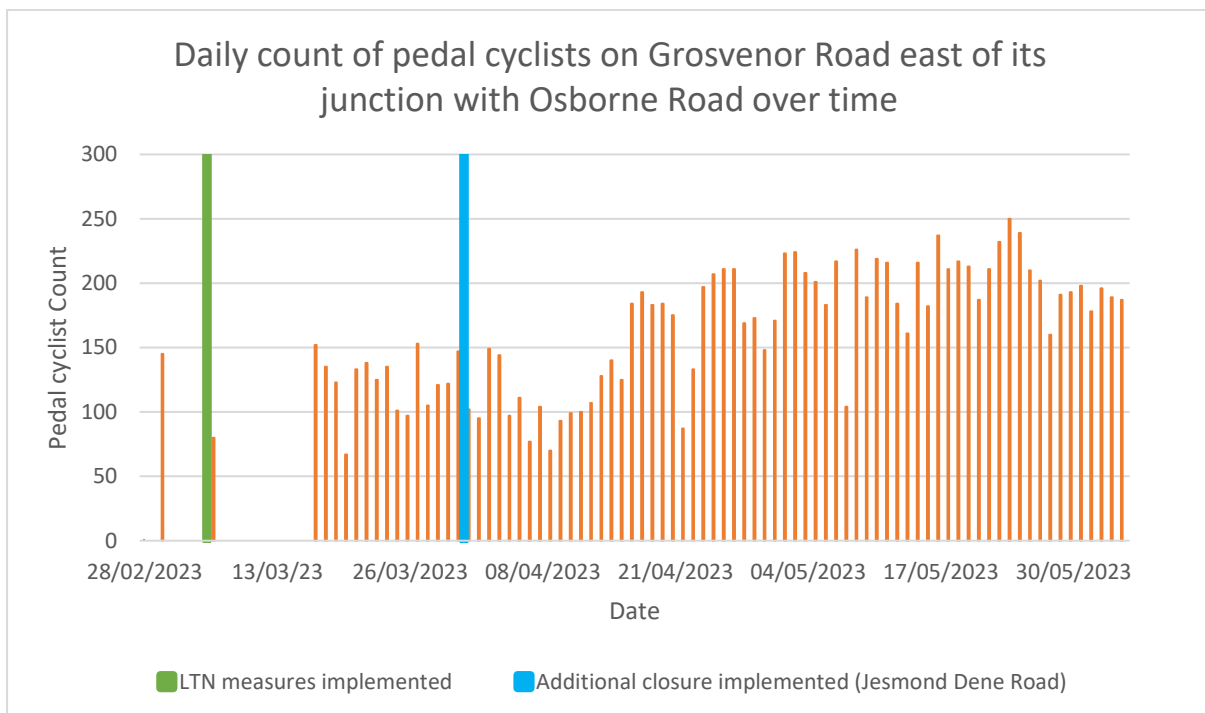


Figure 12 - Pedal cyclists counted daily on Grosvenor Road east of its junction with Osborne Road over time. *Due to technical issues, the data in this format is only available on 06/03/23 between 03/03/23 and 29/03/23.

The above chart highlight increases in the number of pedal cyclists utilising these routes over time subsequent to the implementation of the additional closure on Jesmond Dene Road. This increase is most noticeable on Grosvenor Road. However, with these changes over time, it should be reiterated that these figures encompassing pedestrian and cyclist traffic are subject to seasonal variation. As such, typically warmer months can often produce increased levels of walking and cycling. Monitoring over time will help to further understand changes that occur outside of these factors.

Findings from Commonplace / feedback from residents

Summary

As of 14 June 2023, there have been 1,539 individual respondents on the Commonplace platform. Respondents have made 2,361 comments. Of the comments – 327 are positive, 23 are mostly positive, 19 are neutral, 48 are mostly negative, 1109 are negative and 840 had no sentiment chosen.

Quotes from the Jesmond East Commonplace Trials website

“I have to take my granddaughter to school in Jesmond and this idiotic scheme has added 45 minutes to a 15-minute journey. My granddaughter has to be up an hour earlier and sometimes doesn’t have time to eat breakfast”

“We live in Jesmond Vale. The LTN has caused major difficulties for my partner and I getting our children to and from nursery (Jesmond Nursery) and school (WJPS); I am now routinely late for work; my partner has had to refuse self-employed work; it has significantly and negatively affected our work-life balance; we are now using Acorn Road amenities less; all travel takes longer irrespective of where we are going as we are compelled to use the heavily congested coast road; our youngest child is required to play in the garden of her nursery with idling traffic queuing directly adjacent. The LTN is poorly designed and has cut us off from the rest of our community”

“I now have to work later at work (Nuffield Health Newcastle Hospital), because I start later due to the extended travel. I can’t set off earlier because I drop my child at school first, so this has impacted my home life because I now get home much later”

“This has made living Jesmond so inconvenient and frankly unsustainable – people can’t get to work, school, hospital appointments. Traffic is unbearable, pollution must be so much higher with stationary cars. This is going to cause a mass exodus of people who live in Jesmond and isolate more vulnerable members of the community. I haven’t spoken to anyone who supports the measures”

“It cuts off my residence by car from half of Jesmond and increases my journey time to certain locations by more than 20 minutes in busy times. This increases pollution and costs me more time and money”

“Very inconvenient and a pain for commuting”

“The whole thing is crazy; I spend an extra half hour getting to meetings in Jesmond. A complete farse, the roads are there to be used not to block off communities. The area should be back open, and it will help with all the extra traffic on the main roads. A crazy and stupid idea.”

“Absolutely terrible idea. Traffic has become a total nightmare along Osborne Road. Travel time in and out of work has more than doubled. The cut throughs eased traffic and made access to the coast so much easier. My journey home used to take 15 minutes; I now sit in traffic for over half an hour before I get onto the coast road. How is this reducing emissions and making Jesmond a better place?”

“All these bollards are seriously affecting footfall to the stores in the area. Having traded on Acorn Road for almost 40 years, we have never experienced such a sharp decline in business (30% down)”

“I really feel for the businesses on this block. People who use them from beyond the NE2 postcode will struggle with access due to the traffic chaos that has been generated, resulting in them removing their patronage. Disastrous for these businesses. The home owners on manor house road now face a wholly unnecessary detour if they need to leave NE2 to head east. What is the value of this closure? Other than empty streets and a huge amount of ugly ill-considered signage”

“I broadly support the idea of LTN’s and think Jesmond could be ideally suited to them. However, I would like confirmation that there has been / is ongoing assessment of the changes impact on traffic on surrounding roads and the impact on businesses in the area who seem to be universally opposed”

“I live very close to Jesmond Road. The traffic is extremely heavy. Why is nothing being done to reduce the pollution caused from this road?”

“The traffic has not disappeared as had hoped, it merely moved onto the boundary roads. All of my journeys within the neighbourhood are made on foot and it’s only when I am travelling further afield that I use the car but as I cannot avoid travel in rush hour to get to work, I am sat in queues daily on both Osborne Road and Jesmond Road. In the weeks since the scheme started, my journey time has not decreased. I have to assume worst case journey time as I have a child at after school club with a fixed finish time”

“I am just pleased there are traffic counters in place, as I do not recognise this traffic or the delays claimed. For me, at rush hours, it was busier for a few weeks, and now it is not much worse than before, getting better each week. Osborne Road this morning clear at 9.10am, and free flowing on Jesmond Road. We see the effects in practice, and now cycles can use the streets in LTN rather than the pavement”

“Love the low traffic neighbourhood! As a Jesmond resident who doesn’t drive, I really appreciate safer and quieter roads. There are already far too many cars here and parking/ pollution is a nightmare. Thank you for these”

“What a difference! A street transformed from a noisy, fume-filled rat-run to a pleasant walkway down to Jesmond Dene”

“The streets around me are so much quieter and more pleasant since the scheme came in. Much safer for pedestrians and cyclists. The slightly increased difficulty getting to and from the coast is a minor problem. The pluses definitely outweigh any minuses”

“It’s a lot safer for kids and myself when biking through the area”

“It just feels so much safer walking and cycling here, especially when I’m with my children”

“It has made cycling through this area of Jesmond much safer by reducing the amount of motor vehicle traffic. It has been required as due to the single lane nature of the roads due to parking on both sides, many drivers appear oblivious to the presence of cycles and do not give way to cycles already on the road or move off centre to give passing space”

“I can walk with my children in a safer place. The quality of the air has changed. I feel safer and less stressed knowing that my children are living in a cleaner, safer, environment”

“It reduces traffic, encourages cycling and reclaims the streets for children”

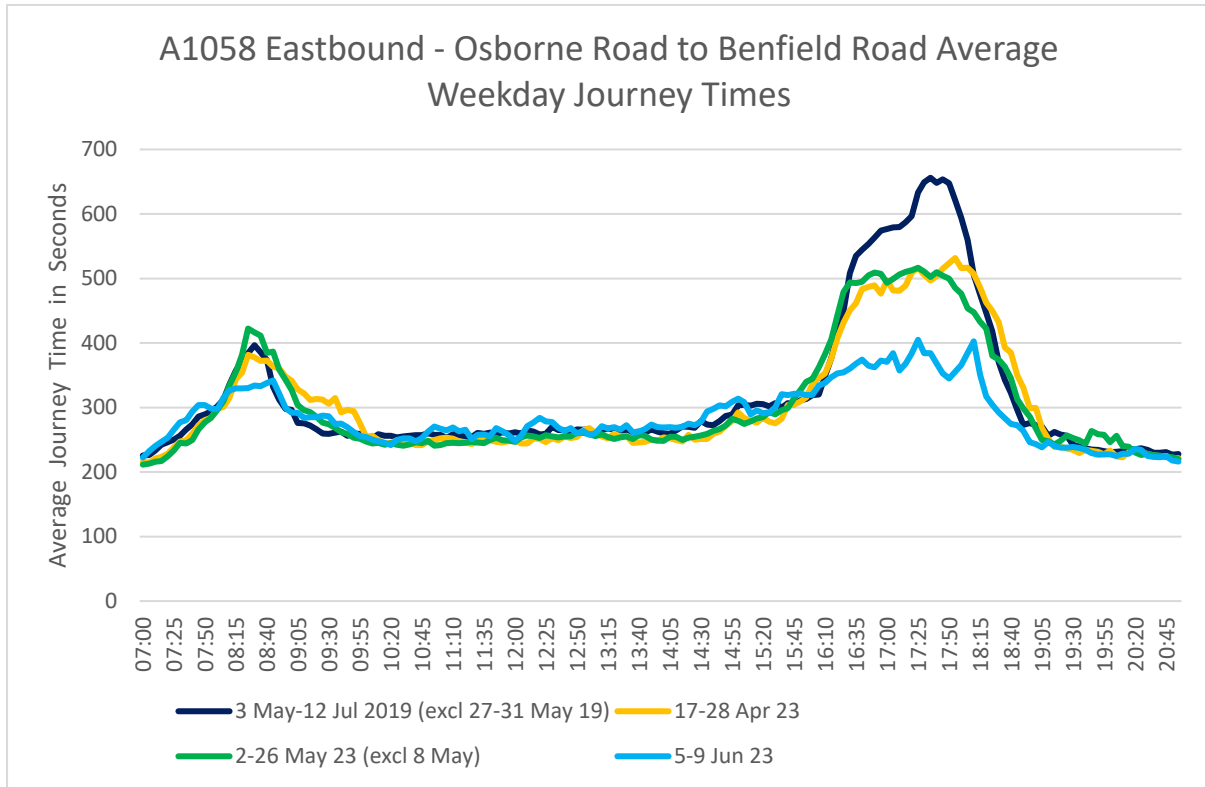
“Less traffic overall, more of it on main roads instead of through residential neighbourhoods. Simple. Great scheme and worth a little inconvenience for the sake of healthy residential neighbourhoods where you can know open your windows, walk, breathe. Tried and tested across the developed world”

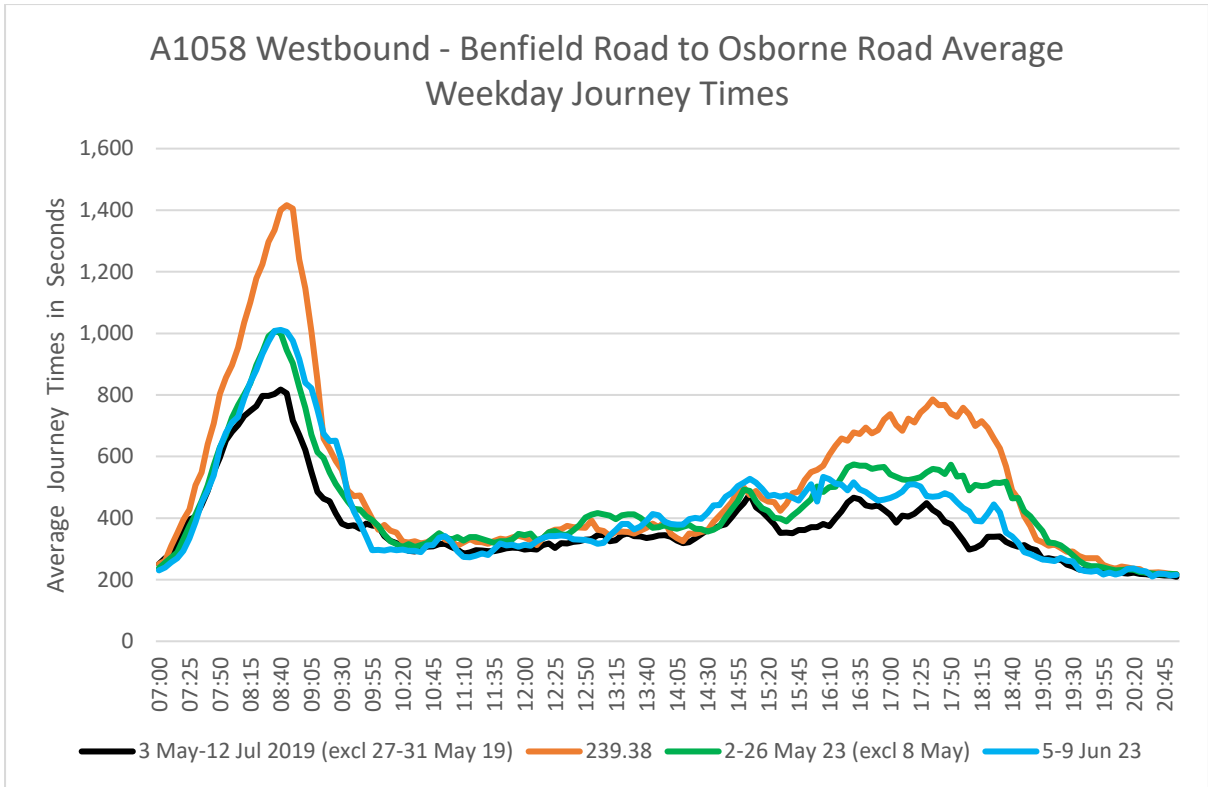
“The benefits of this scheme have become clearer by the week. The neighbourhood is now much quieter, there are youngsters playing footie in the road, more people are walking and cycling. I recognise that there is inconvenience, particularly perhaps for those on the west side of the bollards who work to the east, but I believe all have had to adjust and that the inconvenience is far outweighed by a neighbourhood having been regained from through traffic of these from well outside its borders. I am grateful to the Council for this robust action”

Appendices

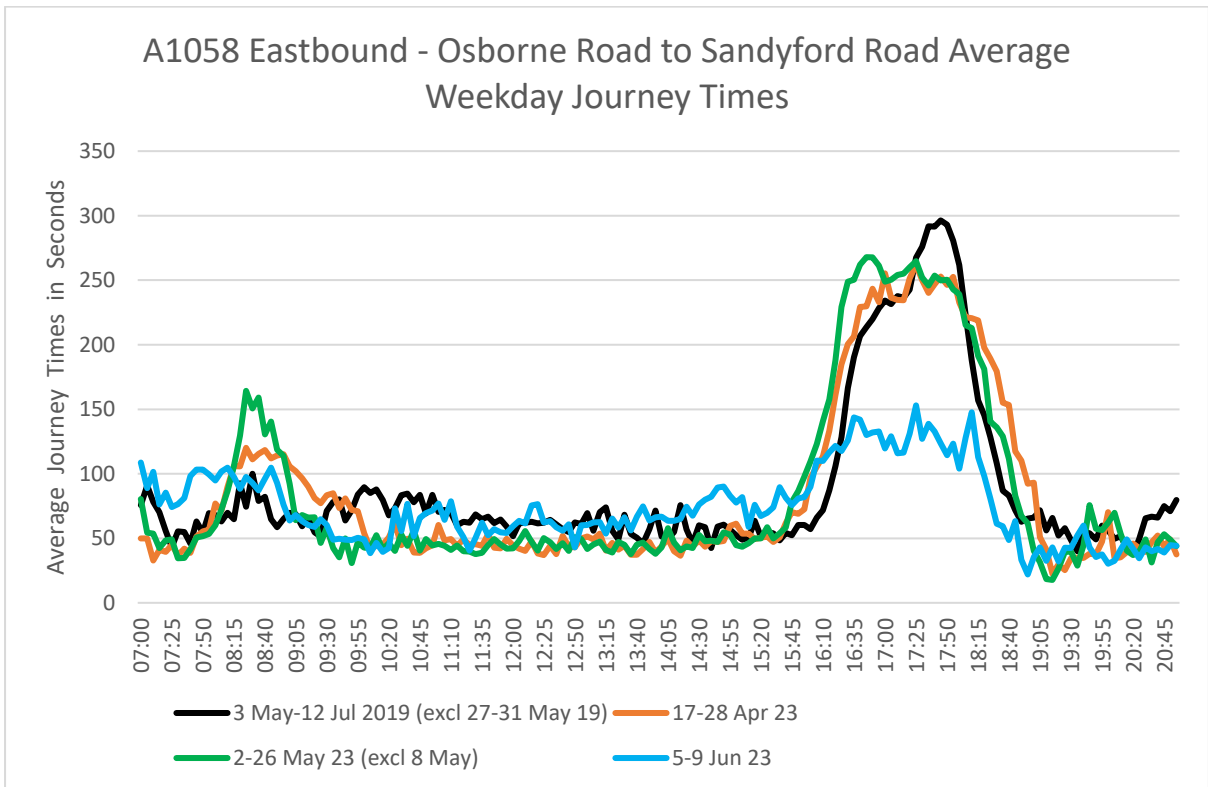
Appendix 1 – A1058 Journey time charts

Osborne Road to Benfield Road





Osborne Road to Sandyford Road



A1058 Westbound - Sandyford Road to Osborne Road Average Journey Times

