

Covid-19

Local authority travel and transport data

Weekly digest



Week Commencing

10th August 2020

Local authority travel and transport data weekly digest

Introduction

Since the imposition of travel restrictions designed to help dramatically reduce the spread of Covid-19, the Transport Technology Forum has led the collation of transport data from local authorities into information used to understand changes in travel behaviour.

Authorities from cities, towns and counties across England are sharing urban traffic control and automated traffic counter data from the roadside, as well as information on cycling and car parks. Industry has also supplied video analytics and floating vehicle data patterns. This sits alongside data the Department receives about rail and air, public transport, freight and maritime to summarise how, where and when people and goods are moving around the country.

The Transport Technology Forum is now able to publish outcomes from this data set for interested parties, not least those bodies who went above and beyond the call to share their data with us.

About the Forum

This document has been prepared by the Transport Technology Forum as part of its remit to drive more effective and efficient management of existing and new road networks, as a key national opportunity before, during and after the current Covid-19 emergency.

Road transport will remain a key pillar of how people and goods move across the nation, not just on strategic roads. Improving road travel through technology is a core aim of the Forum.

The Forum promotes a collaborative culture to open up the opportunity and address the caution which has historically impeded efficiency and innovation.

About this Report

The report provides an ongoing snapshot of travel, summarising weekly, daily and hourly changes based on information shared by:

- Traffic – 29 data providers, geographically covering approximately 107 local authority districts.
- Cycling – 16 data providers, geographically covering approximately 84 local authority districts including nationwide canal and river paths.

This provides an overview of how public behaviour is changing as a result of restrictions being eased, whether travel habits are returning to normal or what new patterns are being experienced. Local Authorities can benefit by being able to compare what is happening in their areas with the national picture, allowing local and national comparisons to be drawn.

Highlights summary

The following provides a high-level summary of the key findings within the data:

Traffic Flow

- Traffic for the week commencing 3rd August saw an increase in flows (1.4 percentage points) compared to the previous week, bringing the overall traffic count average for the week to a reduction of 11.6% compared to the baseline (first week in February 2020).
- Monday 3rd August and Sunday 9th August saw 7% and 4% increases respectively compared to the previous week, while the rest of the week showed a 1-3% increase in traffic volumes, except for Wednesday which remained the same.
- Hourly traffic volumes show interpeak levels on par with pre-lockdown levels, which may be driven by the August school holidays. Both AM and PM traffic levels have shown minor increases since the previous week, where PM peaks have returned to pre-lockdown levels and AM peaks are still significantly below.
- Analysis of vehicle classification data (where available) shows that car and HGV/LGV volumes have returned to baseline levels, while motorcycle use continues to surge well above the baseline.

Cycling

- Cycling flows for the week commencing 3rd August show a 79% increase on baseline levels, an increase of approximately 2 percentage points compared to the previous week.
- Monday 3rd August experienced a 74.5% increase on baseline cycling volumes, approximately 75 percentage points more than the previous Monday. This is most likely due to poor weather that occurred last Monday. Tuesday to Thursday this week saw an approximately 20% reduction in cycling compared to the last week, possibly due to the exceptionally warm weather on those days.
- Cycling volumes continue to increase week to week on both weekdays and weekends, however, cycling levels are significantly reduced compared to the lockdown period of May (Figure 6). This might suggest that increases in cycling reflected in June and July data reflect normal seasonality as opposed to what occurred during lockdown in April and May.
- For the week commencing 3rd August, AM and PM peak cycling volumes are showing a significant increase compared to the previous week, but are still reduced compared to weeks in April and May. This shows a shift in patterns with a sustained increase in AM and PM peak cycling compared to April and May. Although cycling between the peaks is higher than the previous week, it still remains below peak lockdown levels.

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Figure 1 – Key Traffic Flow Dashboard Measures

Overall Daily Traffic Flow Change Compared to Baseline (01-07 Feb 2020)								
Week	1. Monday	2. Tuesday	3. Wednesday	4. Thursday	5. Friday	6. Saturday	7. Sunday	Total
03/08/2020	📉 -10.81%	📉 -11.33%	📉 -8.89%	📉 -14.44%	📉 -14.43%	📉 -12.56%	📉 -8.43%	-11.62%
27/07/2020	📉 -17.40%	📉 -13.53%	📉 -8.31%	📉 -11.50%	📉 -15.92%	📉 -14.39%	📉 -12.62%	-13.04%
20/07/2020	📉 -14.51%	📉 -13.01%	📉 -15.34%	📉 -16.92%	📉 -13.29%	📉 -12.93%	📉 -8.29%	-13.56%
13/07/2020	📉 -13.50%	📉 -15.63%	📉 -18.42%	📉 -16.52%	📉 -15.04%	📉 -15.75%	📉 -16.56%	-15.69%
06/07/2020	📉 -20.47%	📉 -16.38%	📉 -18.22%	📉 -19.96%	📉 -18.65%	📉 -17.16%	📉 -16.67%	-17.98%
29/06/2020	📉 -26.95%	📉 -22.51%	📉 -20.59%	📉 -21.74%	📉 -18.25%	📉 -21.55%	📉 -16.64%	-21.11%
22/06/2020	📉 -25.05%	📉 -24.28%	📉 -19.67%	📉 -23.30%	📉 -22.47%	📉 -26.00%	📉 -24.02%	-23.47%
Total	-27.07%	-24.75%	-24.52%	-26.12%	-25.86%	-26.05%	-26.18%	-25.84%

Figure 1: Key dashboard figures showing change in average daily traffic volumes compared to the baseline (first week of February 2020)

Figure 2 – Key Cycling Dashboard Measures

Overall Daily Cycling Change Compared to Baseline (01-07 Feb 2020)								
Week	1. Monday	2. Tuesday	3. Wednesday	4. Thursday	5. Friday	6. Saturday	7. Sunday	Total
03/08/2020	📈 74.68%	📈 54.52%	📈 44.88%	📈 55.63%	📈 56.93%	📈 145.95%	📈 157.14%	79.29%
27/07/2020	📉 -0.58%	📈 74.26%	📈 65.06%	📈 86.82%	📈 53.06%	📈 118.92%	📈 159.80%	77.14%
20/07/2020	📈 70.79%	📈 81.88%	📈 64.44%	📈 53.66%	📈 53.50%	📈 10.34%	📈 171.43%	68.94%
13/07/2020	📈 52.44%	📈 42.65%	📈 34.74%	📈 50.88%	📈 83.33%	📈 139.61%	📈 110.31%	83.72%
06/07/2020	📈 70.73%	📈 52.95%	📉 -7.86%	📈 8.57%	📈 50.59%	📈 122.10%	📈 165.88%	60.00%
29/06/2020	📈 23.40%	📈 12.64%	📈 38.89%	📈 43.90%	📈 19.19%	📈 71.81%	📈 134.45%	43.80%
22/06/2020	📈 70.83%	📈 94.29%	📈 64.91%	📈 62.87%	📈 61.67%	📈 25.93%	📈 116.07%	63.16%
Total	16.47%	17.66%	4.55%	11.03%	17.12%	62.50%	89.45%	25.93%

Figure 2: Key dashboard figures showing change in average daily cycle volumes compared to the baseline (first week of February 2020)

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Figure 3 – Daily average traffic flow change from baseline

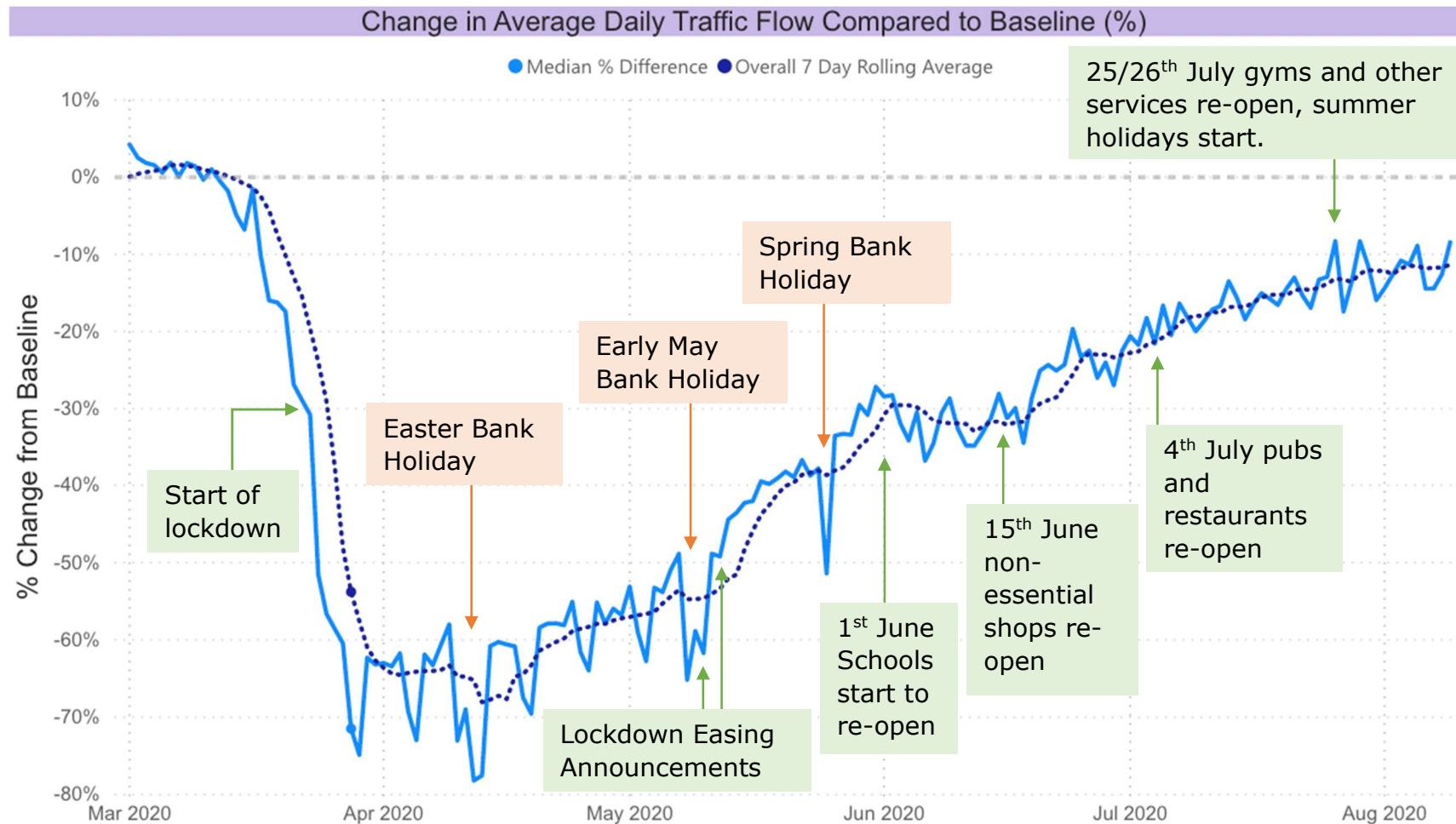


Figure 3: Change in average daily traffic volumes since 01st March across all sources compared to the baseline (first week of February 2020)

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Figure 4 – Hourly traffic flow comparison per week

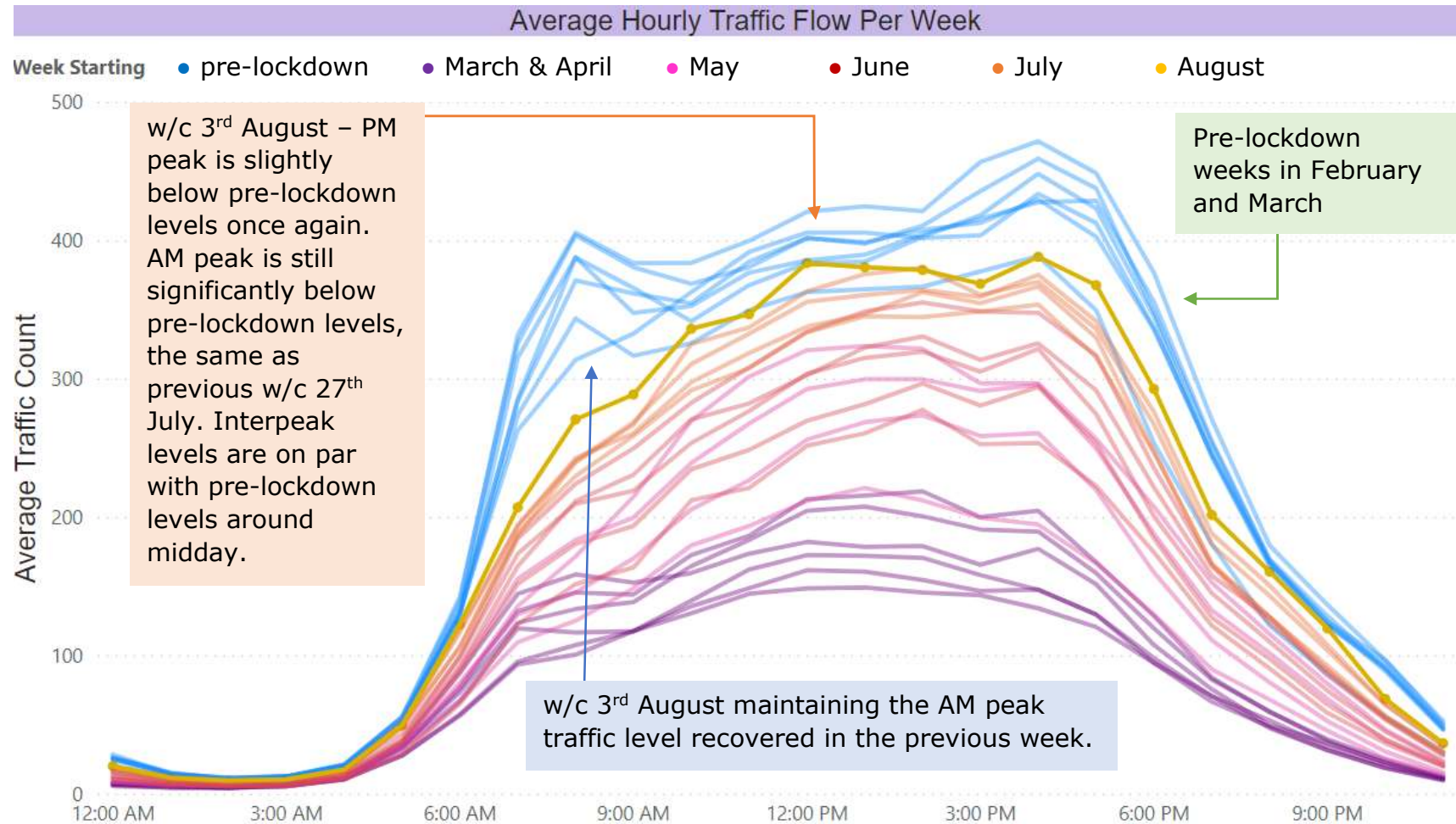


Figure 4: Change in average hourly traffic volumes per week since 1st full week in February across all sources with latest week highlighted.

Figure 5 – Change in journeys by vehicle class

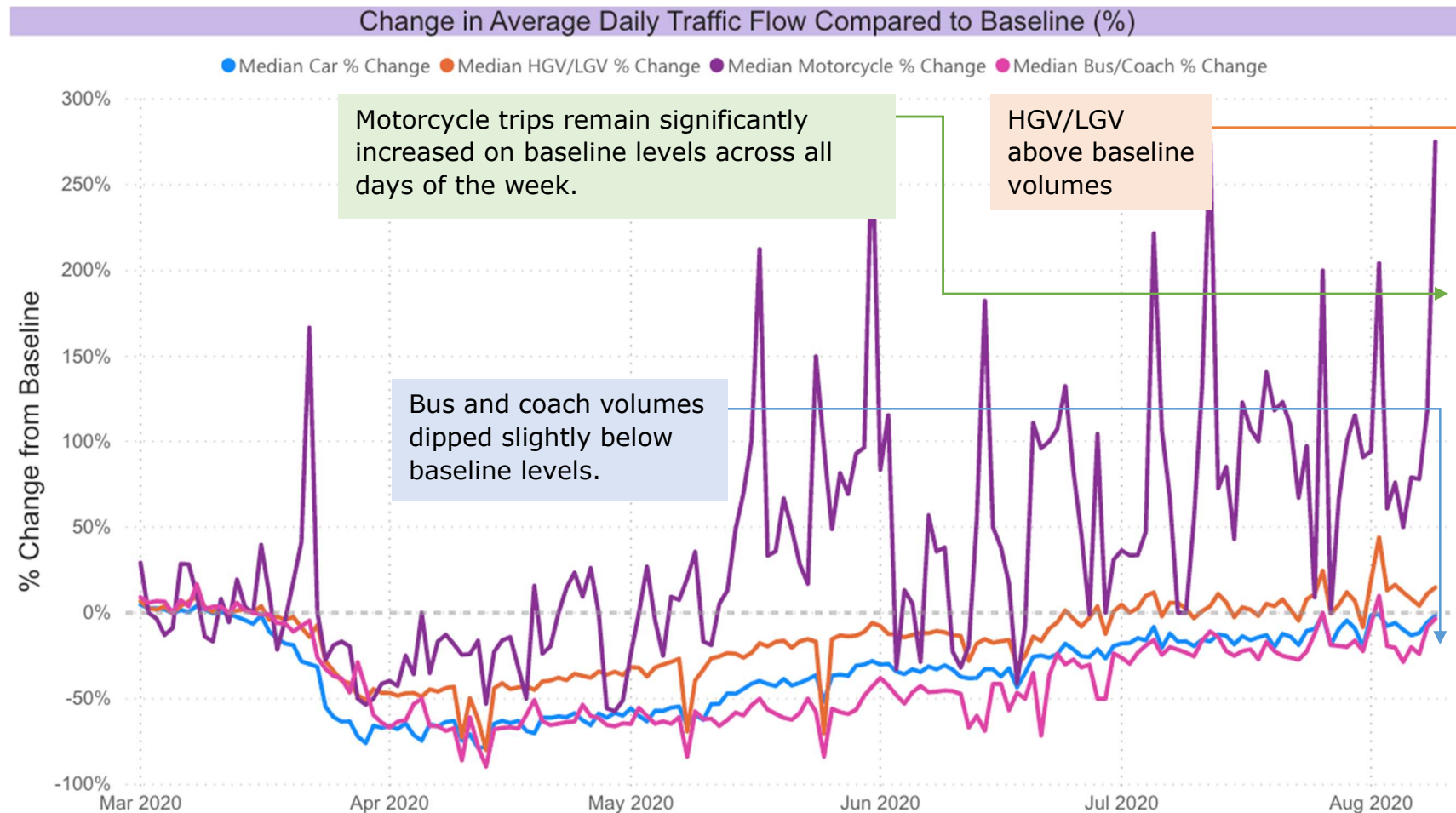


Figure 5: Change in average vehicle trips by vehicles class where available in the source dataset (note this data is measured at sensor level so sources with large numbers of sensors will have a greater contribution to the average count)

Figure 6 – Daily average cycling change from baseline

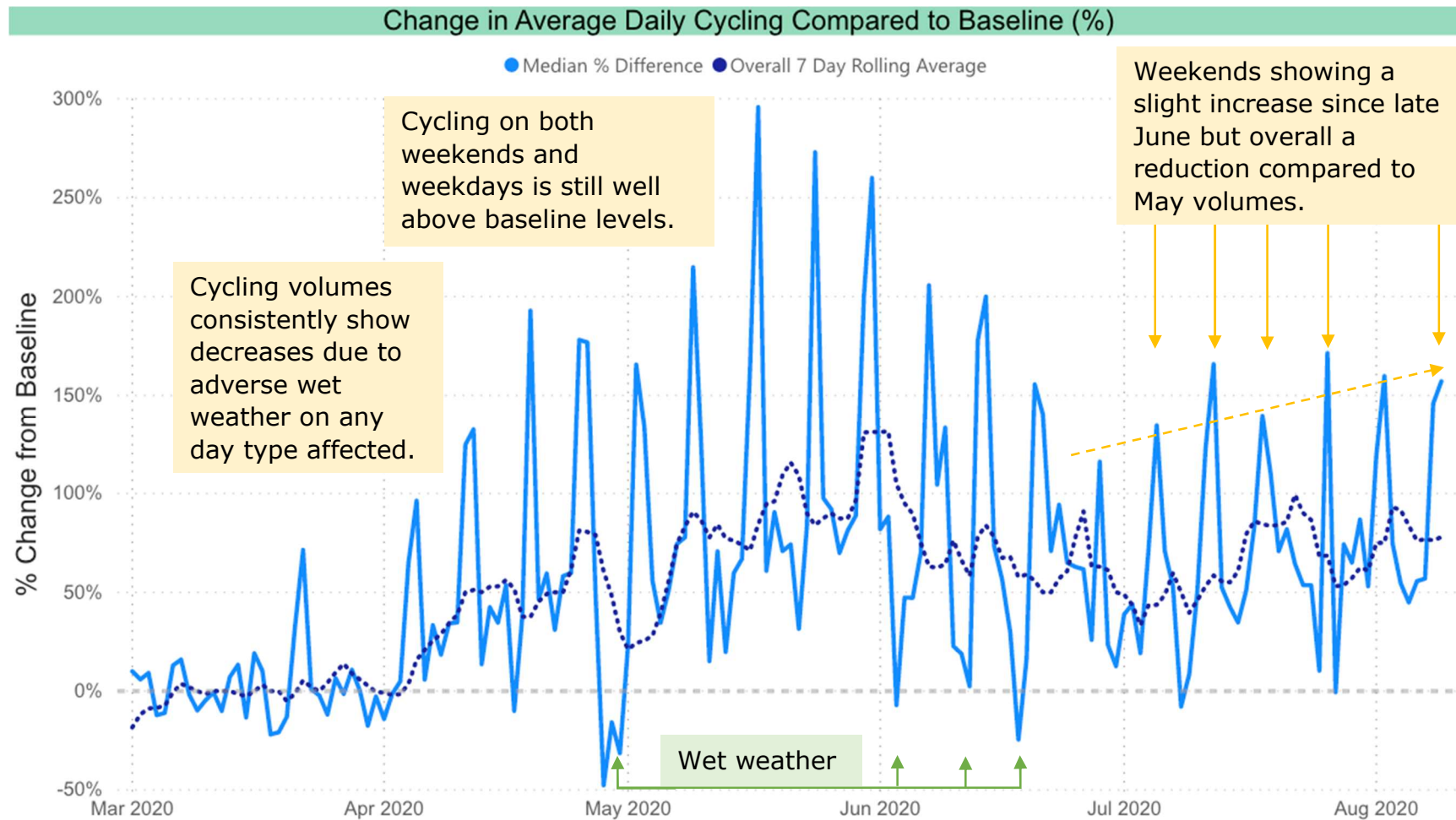


Figure 6: Change in average daily cycling volumes since 01st March (start of lockdown) across all sources compared to the baseline (first week of February 2020)

Figure 7 – Hourly cycling comparison per week

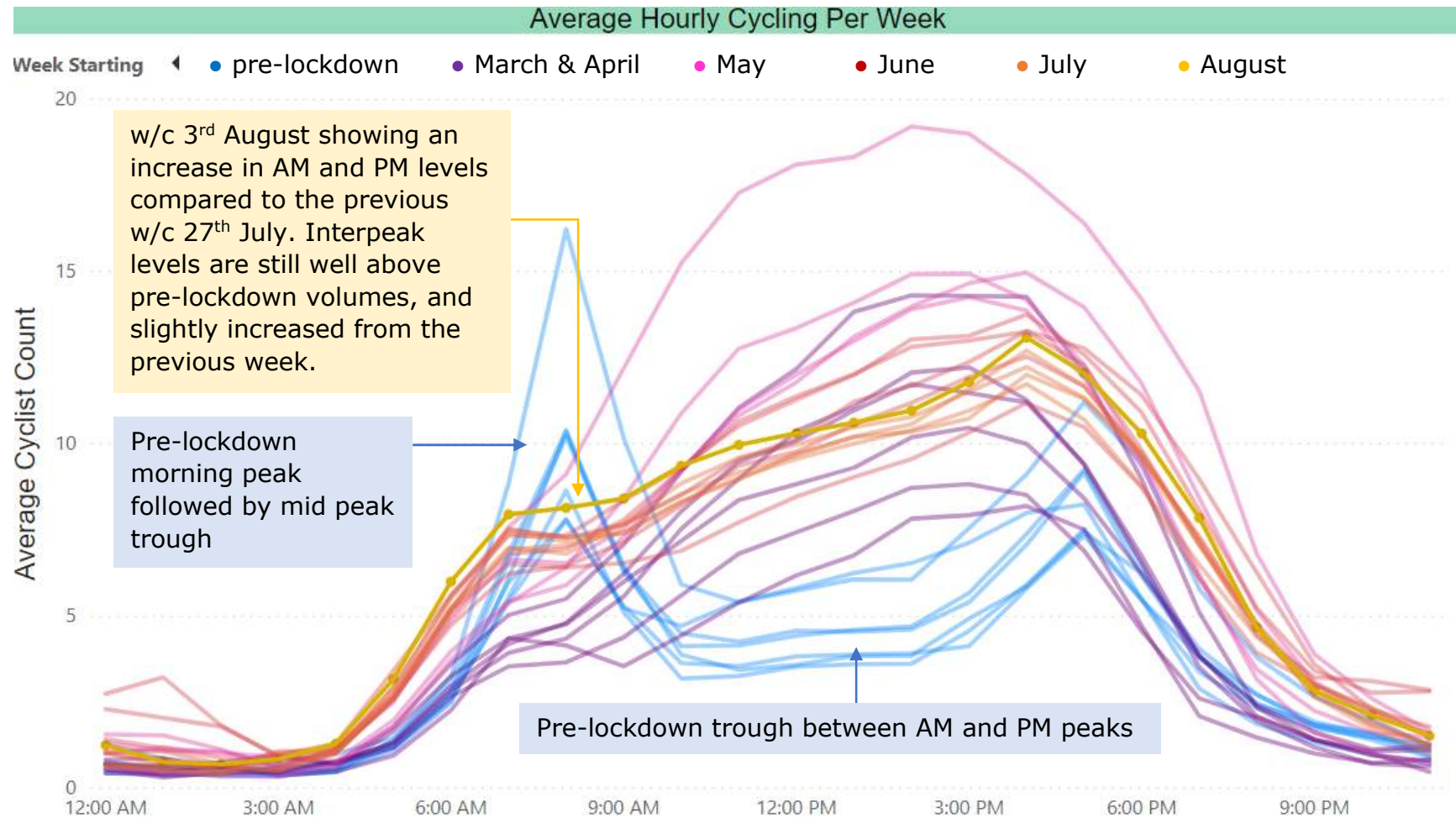


Figure 7: Change in average (mean) hourly cycling volumes per week since 1st full week of February across all sources

Data Method

The following provides some detail behind how the data has been analysed:

- The baseline has been defined as the first week of February 2020 (1st February – 7th February) for the following reasons:
 - This is consistent with national reporting.
 - Not all data sources can provide baseline data from previous years.
 - The first week of February is considered a normal working week unaffected by poor weather and half term dates later in February.
- Each day of the week has its own baseline.
- Only those datasets for which data was available for the first week of February have been included in the baseline comparison outputs.
- Baseline comparisons at aggregated Local Authority District level have only been calculated using traffic/cycling sensors that contributed to the baseline to reduce the impact of new sensors being added to data sources
- Average daily traffic volumes have been used to minimise the impact of individual sensors changing between active and inactive states.
- Averages have been calculated using the median (50th percentile) to reduce the impact of outliers (with the exception of Figure 7 which is a mean average)

Please note that each week not all datasets that contribute to our analysis are available when this report is produced. Therefore, as we add new datasets when they become available, enhance validation of those we've received and refine the underlying methodology, the overall values may change, however we expect the trends to remain the same.

Coming Soon

The Transport Technology Forum is now looking at how these datasets can be collated in the long term as a national data asset to be used following the pandemic. We hope very soon to open up the data sets so authorities can compare their own data with others and the national picture online. Please let us know if you have any thoughts about this, or if you do not want your data being made available in this way.

If you have traffic flow data that you can provide on a daily basis at an hourly aggregation and would like to contribute, please see the contact section for details of how to get in touch.

News from local authorities

Introduction

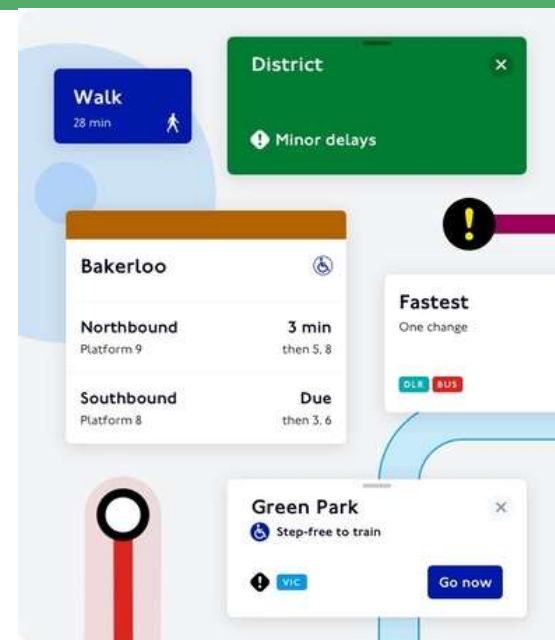
Each week in this digest we will share details of innovations by local authorities, to give readers ideas for policy they could use in their respective areas. This includes new initiatives and the publicity of existing plans and policies with specific relevance to today's challenges. The authors encourage all authorities to share a brief summary of what they are doing in their respective areas. This could simply be a link to a tweet, press release or other online post – it need not be onerous on officials' already busy workload. See "contact us" below for details.

This week we look at a new app to help people safely use public transport in London, a cross-border scheme to reduce traffic in two London boroughs, more enforcement of bus lanes to encourage a return to public transport use, investment in technology and transport solutions and more walking and cycling support.

LONDON

New TfL app to help Londoners plan ahead and travel safely

TfL Go enables customers to plan the best routes and travel outside peak times to help with social distancing.



With more Londoners returning to public transport as the Government's lockdown restrictions are gradually eased and the capital's workplaces and attractions reopen, TfL has released a new travel app to make it easier for customers to plan their journeys.

Services on TfL's Tube, rail and bus services have been restored to normal levels during weekdays and near-normal levels at weekends.

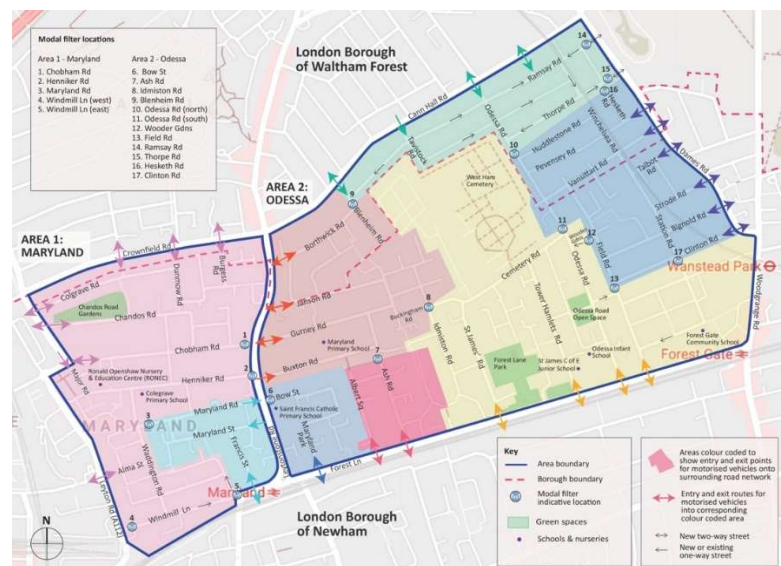
The new iPhone app provides real-time train times in a mobile-friendly way and information to enable travel at quieter times outside peak hours to help customers maintain social distancing. The app also offers alternative routes and walking and cycling options. These features will develop further based on customer feedback.

<https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/media/press-releases/2020/august/new-tfl-app-to-help-londoners-plan-ahead-and-travel-safely>

NEWHAM AND WALTHAM FOREST

Newham and Waltham Forest create the first cross-borough lower traffic neighbourhood in London

Newham and Waltham Forest Councils have come together to create a cross-boundary low traffic scheme that is set to improve the lives of residents in both boroughs.



Both councils are committed to creating people-friendly streets and neighbourhoods to actively encourage walking, cycling and public transport use. They have been working together over the past 18 months, developing and submitting funding bids to the Transport for London (TfL) Liveable Neighbourhoods programme for improvements in

the Forest Gate, Maryland in Stratford, and South Leytonstone areas. It is the first time two London boroughs have come together in this way.

Newham and Waltham Forest are creating an experimental Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) at their border. A proposed LTN was included in 2018 and 2019 joint-borough TfL Liveable Neighbourhoods bids. Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 crisis, TfL has suspended the Liveable Neighbourhoods programme and redirected funding towards emergency interventions to support social distancing and enable active travel.

However, although the Liveable Neighbourhoods funding is currently suspended, both boroughs have agreed to allocate their own funding towards the LTN as part of their commitment to delivering better streets for walking and cycling.

<https://www.newham.gov.uk/news/article/480/newham-and-waltham-forest-create-the-first-cross-borough-lower-traffic-neighbourhood-in-london>

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Bus lane enforcement aims to improve journey times

Northamptonshire County Council will crack down on vehicles illegally using bus lanes – improving journey times for bus users.

The proposal centres on reliable journey times for bus travel encouraging people to start using this more sustainable mode of transport, reducing car volumes and congestion.

The council's Cabinet will be presented with a report for approval which will outline plans to use CCTV and number plate recognition technology.

<https://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/news/council-news/Pages/bus-lane-enforcement-aims-to-improve-journey-times.aspx>

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WEST MIDLANDS

Innovation in technology, transport and housing in £66 million package to help kick start West Midlands economic recovery

Eight 'shovel ready' projects, ranging from the National Brownfield Land Institute to Very Light Rail developments are to benefit from £66 million of Government funding secured for the region.

The money from the Government's Getting Building Fund is aimed at projects which can be started quickly and completed within 18 months. This creates jobs and drives investment to aid the economic recovery following the coronavirus lockdown.

The projects include:

- £1m towards WM5G's work with small and medium sized business to develop ground breaking apps
- £12.4m for the Very Light Rail Innovation Centre in Dudley where new modes of transport which are both green and

cheaper and quicker to deliver than traditional tram or rail are being developed.



<https://www.wmca.org.uk/news/innovation-in-technology-transport-and-housing-in-66-million-package-to-help-kick-start-west-midlands-economic-recovery/>

EAST AYRSHIRE

Increased funding leads to additional cycling, walking and safer routes projects

Following increased funding from Transport Scotland, the Council has made some changes to its Cycling, Walking and Safer Routes (CWSR) programme for 2020/21.

The ARA Roads Investment Capital programme for 2020/21 was approved by Cabinet on 4 March 2020, and the programme for CWSR projects was based upon a provisional allocation of £0.2M from Transport Scotland.

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Due to extra funding through a revised grant offer of £0.536M from Transport Scotland, three additional schemes will now be funded.

<https://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/news/article/increased-funding-leads-to-additional-cycling-walking-and-safer-routes-projects>

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Covid-19 Timeline

FEBRUARY 2020	
04/02/2020	China Advice - All UK citizens advised to leave China
MARCH 2020	
10/03/2020	Italy Air Travel - Majority of flights to and from Italy suspended
12/03/2020	7-day Isolation - 7-day self-isolation for individuals presenting symptoms
16/03/2020	Social Distancing - Households to self-isolate for 14-days if symptoms present. Work from home where possible. Avoid pubs, clubs, theatres etc. 12-week isolation for elderly and vulnerable (commencing end of week)
17/03/2020	UK Foreign Travel 1 - Foreign Secretary advises against all non-essential travel overseas
21/03/2020	Schools Closed - Schools to remain closed until further notice (exception for key workers)
23/03/2020	UK Lockdown - Guidance provided for essential travel only. All non-essential businesses required to close. Public events banned
23/03/2020	UK Foreign Travel 2 - Foreign Secretary advises all British travellers to return to the UK
28/03/2020	PM's Letter - Prime Minister issues guidance letter to all UK households
APRIL 2020	
16/04/2020	NPCC Guidance - NPCC issues guidance clarifying reasonable excuses for leaving home
MAY 2020	
10/05/2020	Those who cannot work from home are encouraged to return to work. Avoid public transport where possible and instead walk or cycle.
11/05/2020	Relaxation Document - The UK government publishes a 50-page document setting out further details of the phases for lifting the lockdown restrictions.
13/05/2020	Individuals can undertake unlimited exercise (and can travel to do so). Individuals can meet someone from another household providing it is on a one-to-one basis. All garden centres are allowed to open. House moves and viewings are now permitted.
18/05/2020	Rail Operators - Rail operators begin running more train services.
JUNE 2020	
01/06/2020	Schools re-open for some pupils. Groups of up to six people from different households allowed to meet outside
15/06/2020	All non-essential retailers and zoos in England reopened
19/06/2020	UK's COVID-19 Alert Level is lowered from Level 4 (severe risk, high transmission) to Level 3 (substantial risk, general circulation)
JULY 2020	
04/07/2020	Further relaxation of social distancing and reopening of pubs, restaurants, hotels and hairdressers on 4 th July
25/07/2020	Gyms and other indoor services reopen in England

Contact us

All authorities are encouraged to share best practice for inclusion in this report. Authorities not yet contributing but who still have, in particular, cycling data to share are encouraged to do so.

Please contact info@ttf.uk.net

Thank you to...

All local authorities and their consultancies and contractors who have shared data with the Transport Technology Forum to enable this report to be collated, and those in the wider industry who also provided data directly. The TTF, which is sponsored by the Department for Transport and Innovate UK is grateful to ITS (UK) and its members for their swift support in recruiting Local Authorities to participate.

This report provides regularly updated intelligence and findings from the Transport Technology Forum Covid-19 Local Authority Travel Data Project. This project is collecting and analysing traffic and travel data from local highway authorities across England to present a national picture of travel patterns and behaviour, and local authority responses to the Covid-19 crisis.