



Cycle journeys on the South-West City Way: a descriptive analysis

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Key points:

- There were 107,000 journeys made using the route during the period from early March to late September 2016, giving an average of 520 journeys per day.
- This compares with an average of 195 journeys per day made on the Argyle Street-Anderston Bridge section of the West City Way during the same time period.
- Use of the route grew steadily throughout the seven months studied, but there is insufficient data available currently to determine the extent to which this growth is due to a seasonal effect, and what is true growth.
- The Glasgow Cordon count recorded increases in cyclists entering and leaving the city via the Tradeston Bridge, to which this route leads, of 57% and 45% respectively, following the introduction of the route.
- More journeys took place on weekdays than weekends, with peaks in use at standard commuting hours.

1. Introduction

The South-West City Way, launched in October 2015, provides 2km of segregated cycleway linking Pollokshields on the southside of Glasgow to the Tradeston Bridge over the river Clyde. The Tradeston Bridge (or “Squiggly Bridge”) provides access to the city centre and other cycle routes. The South-West City Way is shown in dark green in Figure 1 below. The route comprises a number of innovative cycle design features such as a cycle only diagonal crossing with its own traffic light phases separate from the traffic, bus stop bypasses and footrests and handrests at junctions.

Figure 1: Location of South-West City Way.



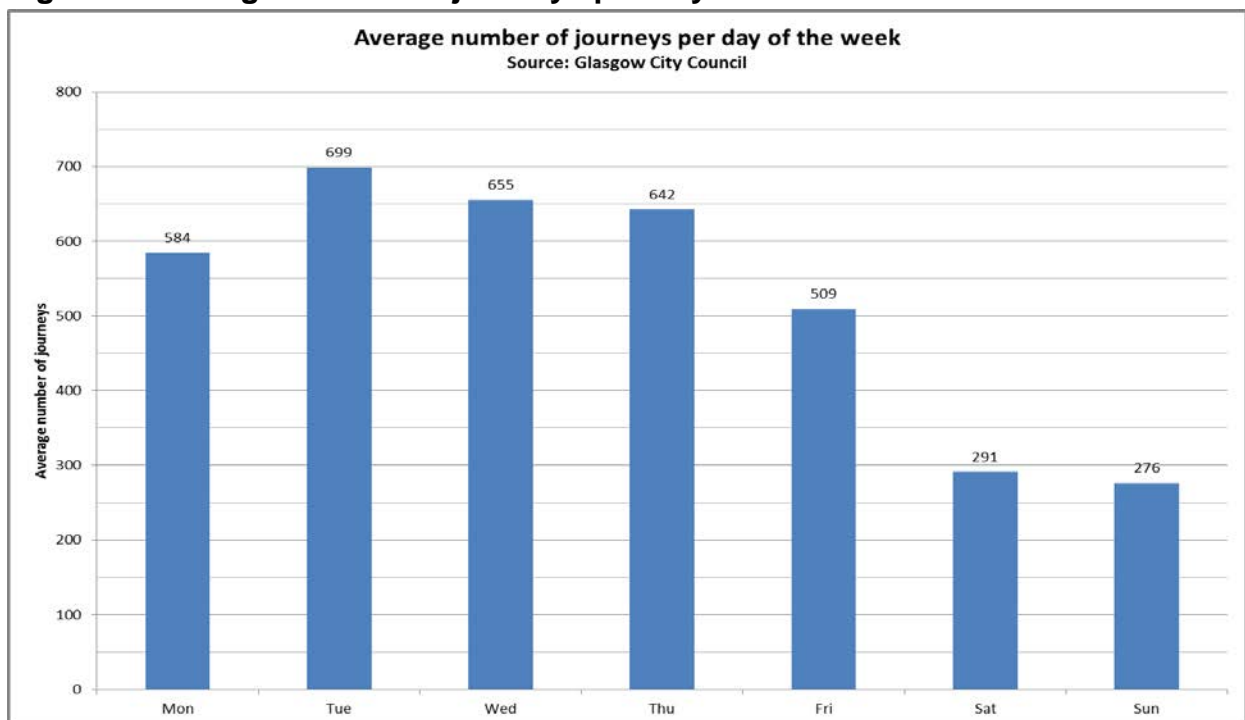
2. Methods

A cycle counter incorporated into the route near the junction of Shields Road and Scotland Street (location shown in Figure 1) went live on 5th March 2016. Data from this counter for the period from Saturday 5th March 2016 to Monday 26th September (205 days) were made available to the GCPH by Glasgow City Council. The data relates to journeys made in either direction on the route as it was not possible to disaggregate them at the time. These issues have now been resolved.

3. Results

During the approximately seven-month period studied, there were 106,980 journeys made in either a northbound or southbound direction on the route. This gives an average of 519 journeys per day. As can be seen in Figure 2, more journeys were made on weekdays than weekends, with an average number of journeys per day on weekdays of 616 compared with 283 per day at weekends. The greatest number of journeys were made on Tuesdays.

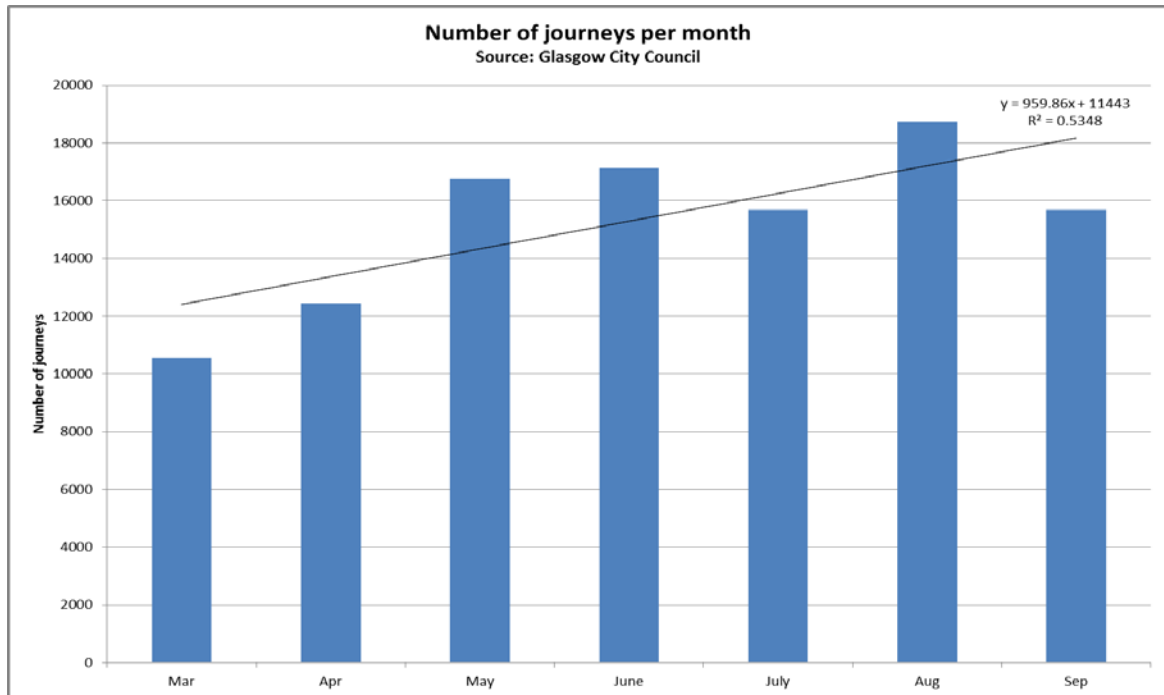
Figure 2: Average number of journeys per day of the week.



The number of journeys made on the route appears to have been steadily rising through the time period studied, although a longer data collection period is needed to determine to what extent this growth is due to a seasonal effect of favourable weather conditions and long daylight. The data currently available covers the late

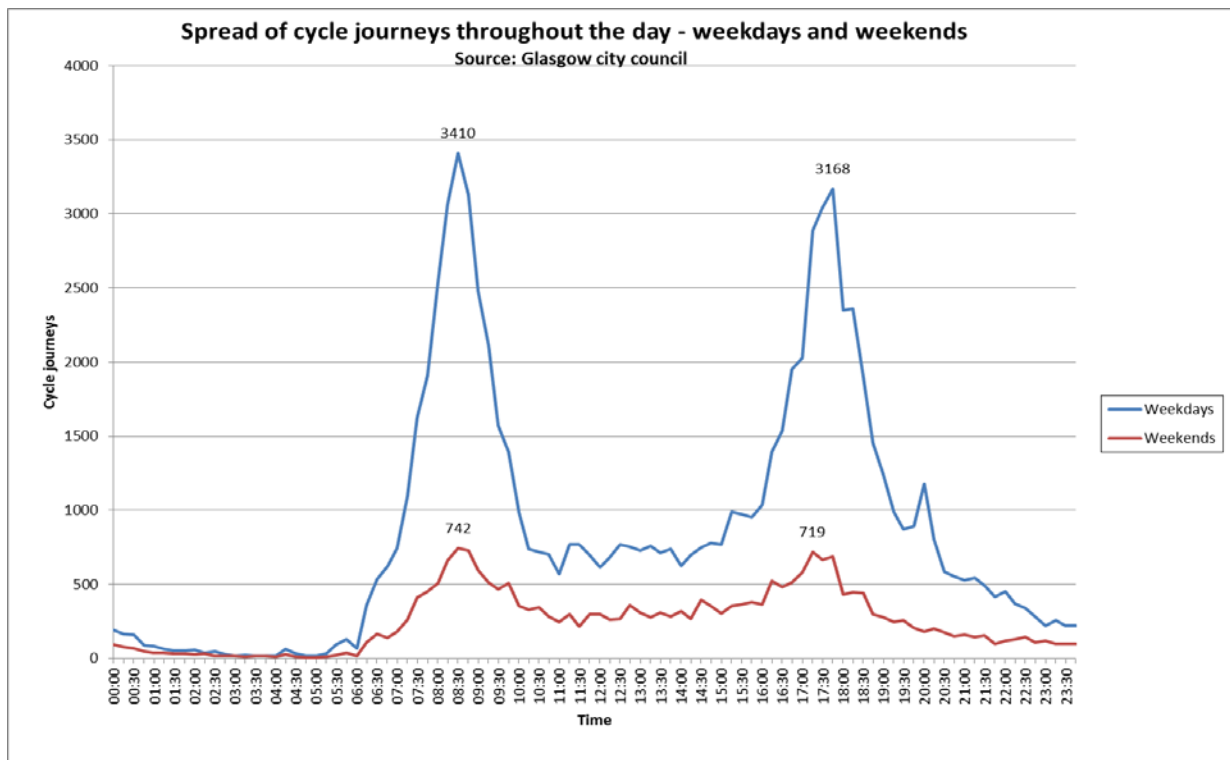
spring/summer/early autumn period, with no data available for late autumn/winter/early spring when daylight is shorter and weather conditions likely to be less favourable. A linear trend line fitted to the data suggests that usage of the route during the period studied grew by approximately 1,000 journeys per month.

Figure 3: Number of journeys per month.



In terms of the spread of journeys throughout the day, clear peaks in usage can be seen during standard commuting hours. As shown in Figure 4, this pattern is still visible at weekends but much less pronounced. On weekdays the number of journeys peak at 8.30am and 5.45pm.

Figure 4: Spread of cycle journeys throughout the day.



4. Summary

The route attracted on average more than 500 cyclists a day between March and September 2016, with a steady increase in cyclist numbers during this period. The impact of seasonal effects on this trend is of interest and further research should be undertaken to analyse the data gathered for the period from October 2016 to March 2017 to study this. The data could also be linked to weather data for the area to assess the impact of weather conditions on cycling levels. Data from the Glasgow Cordon Count which measures the number of cyclists at 35 entry and exit points in the city during two days in September each year, shows a large increase in numbers of cyclists using the Tradeston Bridge from 2015 to 2016. Given that the South-West City Way route leads to the Tradeston Bridge and that it was introduced in the month following the 2015 survey, it would seem that the route is attracting cyclists. The data from the two days studied in the cordon count suggests that at least some of this growth is coming from additional cycle journeys rather than diversion of cyclists from existing routes. However further research with users would be required to confirm that this is the case. Compared with the Argyle Street-Anderston Bridge, which forms part of the West City Way, the route, although newer, already appears to be attracting a larger number of users. This may be for a number of factors including perceptions of quality of the routes, the availability of alternative routes, extent of changes required from the existing routes of cyclists and the adjacent cycle infrastructure. Also, it may be that cyclists are more likely to use only part of the

West City Way route for a journey). Qualitative research with users of the South-West City Way and comparison of this with research previously commissioned by the GCPH looking at users' attitudes towards the West City Way¹ would help to elucidate this. Like the Argyle Street-Anderston Bridge, a major use of the South West City Way appears to be commuting. The route has a number of features which are designed to improve safety for cyclists. It would be interesting now to compare accident statistics for the years immediately preceding the introduction of the route, with those following its introduction in October 2015.

This reports forms part of a series of reports detailing descriptive analyses of data relating to cycling in Glasgow. These reports provide a picture of aspects of current cycling activity within the city. The other three reports cover [cycle journeys on the Anderston-Argyle Street Bridge](#), the [Hands Up Survey of methods of travel to school for Glasgow school pupils](#), and [analysis of Glasgow's public bike hire scheme](#).

References

1. Hewitt E, MacMillan K, Shaw L. A mixed method study exploring the views of cyclists and pedestrians using the new Kelvingrove-Anderston route in Glasgow. Glasgow: GCPH; 2015. Available at: http://www.gcph.co.uk/publications/538_the_kelvingrove-anderston_route_views_of_cyclists_and_pedestrians (accessed January 2017)

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