

Keyhole Bridge – O&S Board 1 March 2021

Why the BCP Conservative Transport PFH decision to re-open to traffic has failed the Constitution requirements

Compiled by Councillor Andy Hadley, Poole Town Ward



Boris Johnson urges councils to “crack on” with cycle lanes and low traffic neighbourhoods

● Prime Minister says government’s research highlights majority support for active travel

Transport Secretary: “half of urban journeys must be cycled or walked” by 2030

📅 4 February, 2021 👤 Mark Sutton

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps has **told a UK transport committee panel** that there is now an ambition to see “half of all journeys in towns and cities to be walked or cycled by 2030.”

Speaking remotely, Mr Shapps reiterated a statement first set out during the launch of the Government’s **Gear Change document**, which has formed a loose foundation for progress since Boris Johnson took the helm as Prime Minister.



(b) Ensure that the decision and the decision-making process are lawful

- Decision-making process has been opaque, appears to have been manipulated to achieve the desired outcome which does not fit the evidence
 - Claims a failure to achieve a permanent modal shift. **No evidence** provided, but anecdotally there is a significant increase in numbers walking and cycling through
 - Claims responses skewed by pro-closure lobby, but **ignores** the pro-opening campaign, including by prior Conservative councillors.
 - Claims much smaller cohort of older and less mobile unable to use park. **Untrue**, they can enter via East Gate, Seldown and Twemlow Avenue, and leave via last two.
 - Explanation of motorised traffic flows **was wrong**, this 2.7M wide bridge on a blind bend was used 2 way, which is why it was so hazardous to pedestrians
 - Increased conflict with cycles – **no substantiated or independent reports**, conflicts with many submissions to his report which state how much safer people feel. Bias dismisses prior brushes with cars, and dissuasion from using on foot, in 423 comments.
 - Claims no crashes since 2013 –there was a 2 car collision here at **7:14pm, 31st July 2018**, resulting in injury. Evidence was submitted of people too scared to share it with cars.

Details of the scheme

The aim of this trial is to create a safer environment to travel to and through the area on foot or by bicycle with safer and more sustainable access to the Poole Park area. A further aim is to reduce the number of vehicles driving through the park itself.

The trial also improves accessibility to the well-used National Cycle Network Route 25.

- Scheme advertised to be consulted from August until at least 21st February 2021 (and for up to 18 months).
- No rationale was given for why necessary to withdraw the scheme early
 - At a time when the Covid-19 rates in the BCP area were amongst the highest in the country, and the area was and still is in lockdown, with local outdoor exercise recommended.
- Draft decision did not include the economic analysis that was used in the final decision, Members of Council and members of the public had inadequate time to analyse and review this late excuse, and I submit that the due process was not followed.
- This Economic analysis was deeply flawed

Ward Councillor Endorsement

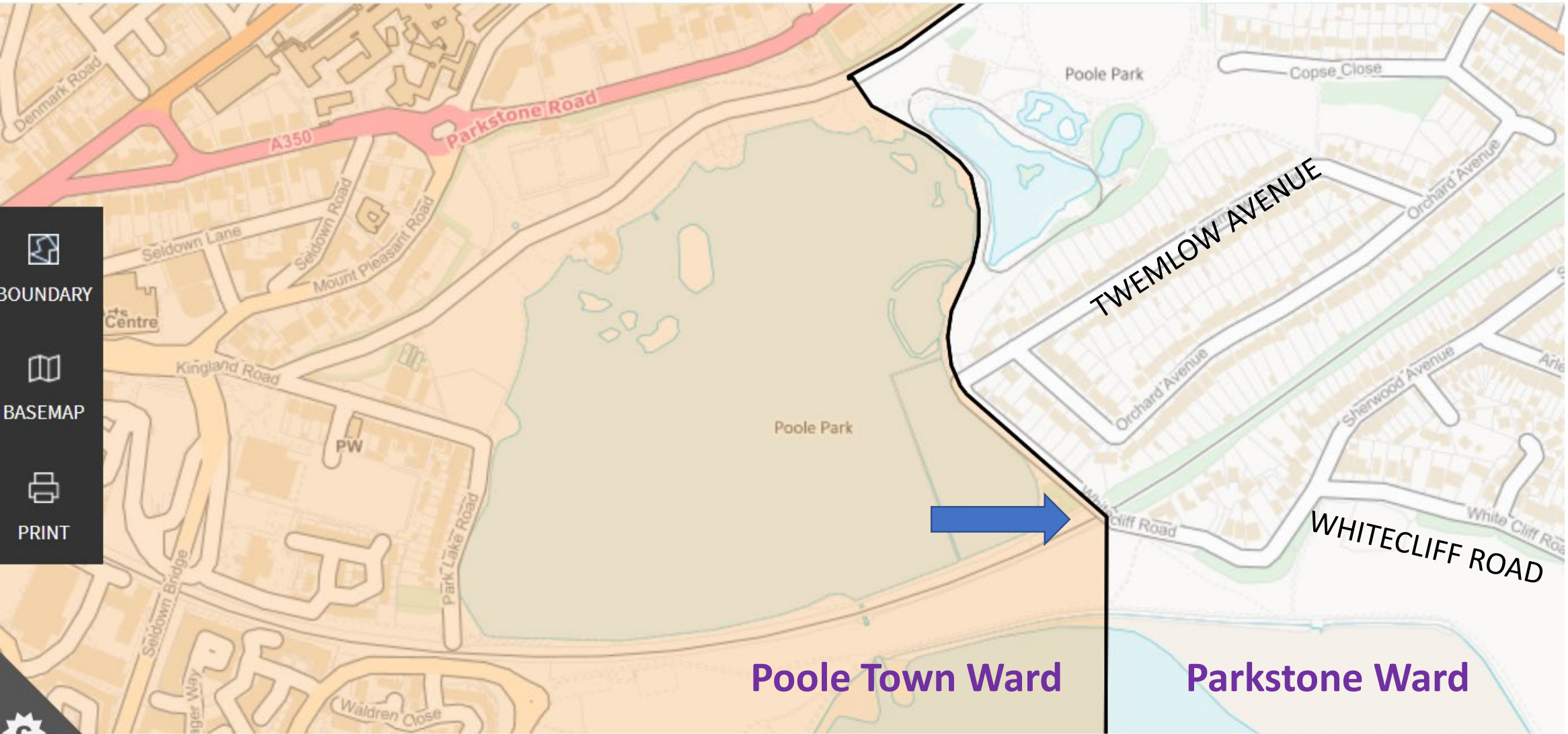
- Bridge is on the ward boundary
 - 2 Parkstone Cllrs favour reopening
 - 3 Poole Town favour retaining measure
- Claims of Ward Councillor support are wrong



Traffic through 2.7M wide bridge is 2 way,
not as PFH stated outbound & therefore “on Parkstone side of road”
Pavement is about 50cm wide on one side only
Frequently floods in rainy weather, level could be lifted without vehicles
Many respondents cite fear when using on foot with cars present

POOLE TOWN, BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE

Unitary Authorities Unitary Authority Wards



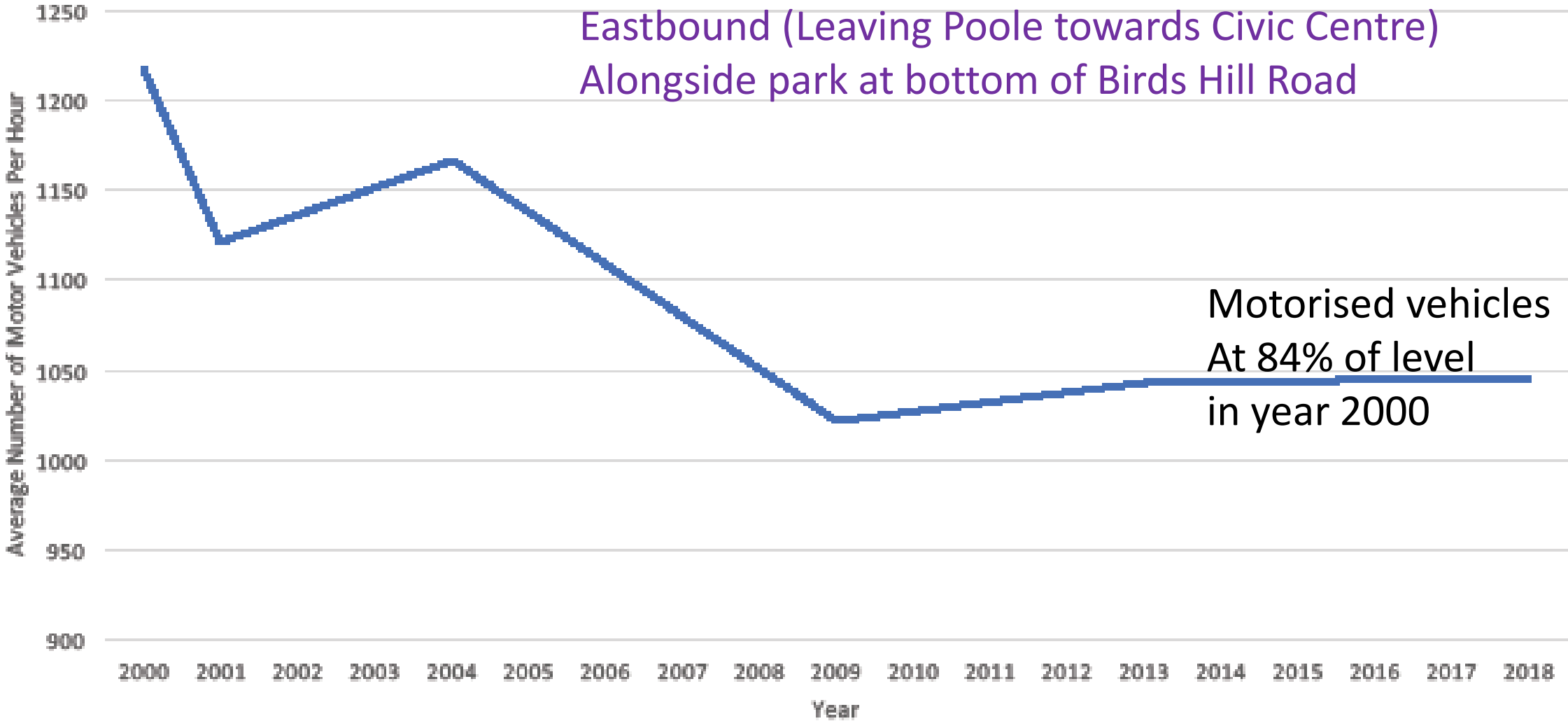
Traffic impacts claimed on Parkstone Road

- 3 minute delay claimed at full economic cost, with no balancing figures for health and wellbeing effects on park users, or air quality impacts there
- Traffic levels did not drop afterwards, suggesting part of rise was summer holiday effect
- Evening peak traffic in 2018 (before Covid) was 84% of that in 2000 (200 cars less per hour) (see graph next slide)
- There is capacity on the road without using the Park
- During 2 week 2016 trial, no changes to traffic lights at Civic Gyratory
- It was a very short term measure, so no time for traffic to adjust
- No account was taken in calculations of effects of “traffic evaporation”

DfT monitoring site
#26990

Parkstone Rd Eastbound Motor Vehicle Counts (Evening Peak)
2000-2018*

*No manual counts 2002-3, 2005-8, 2010-12, 2014-17



Nationally a climb in traffic on minor roads

roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk/summary

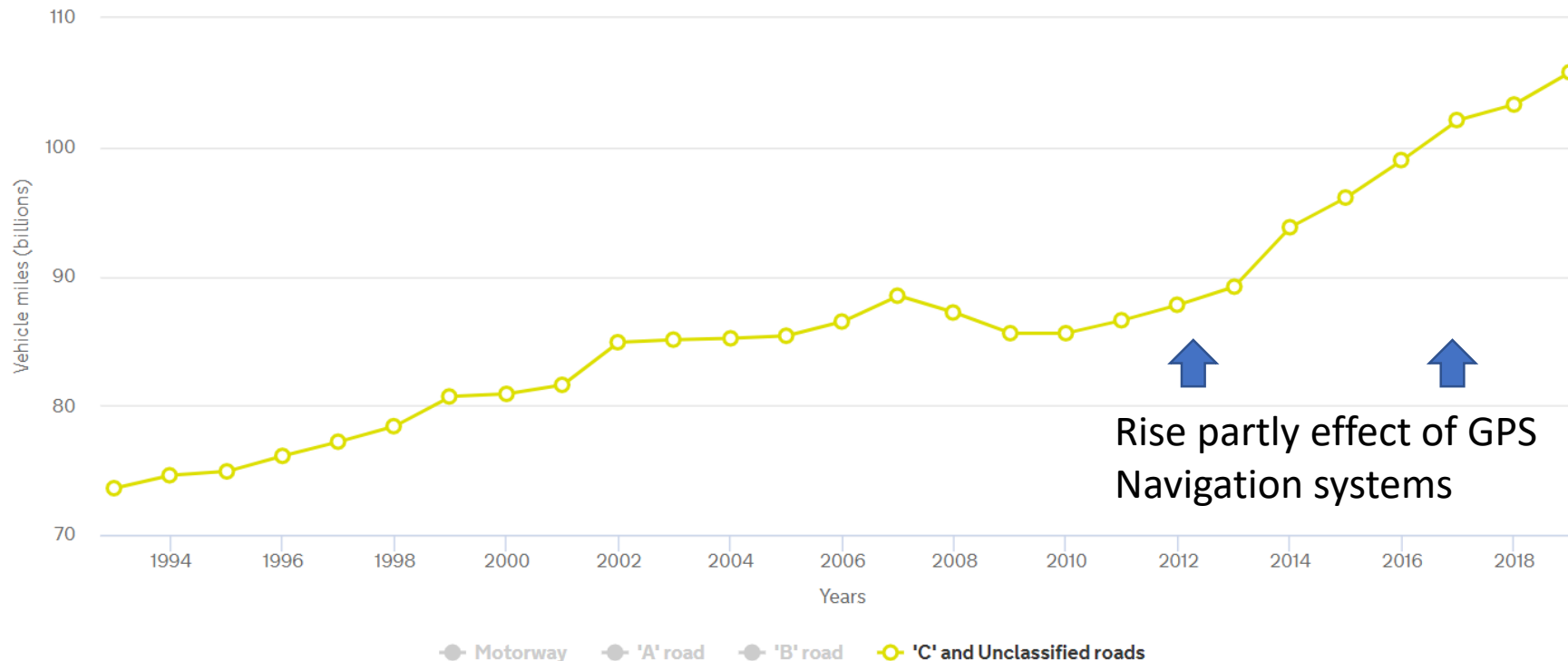
In Poole area, most data gathering on minor roads stopped in 2009

Filter data series:

'C' and Unclassified roads ▾

Annual traffic by road type

Traffic in Great Britain from 1993 to 2017 by road type in vehicle miles (billions)



On a 2000 baseline,

by 2010

Increase 8.5%

By 2019 this had
risen by 30.8%

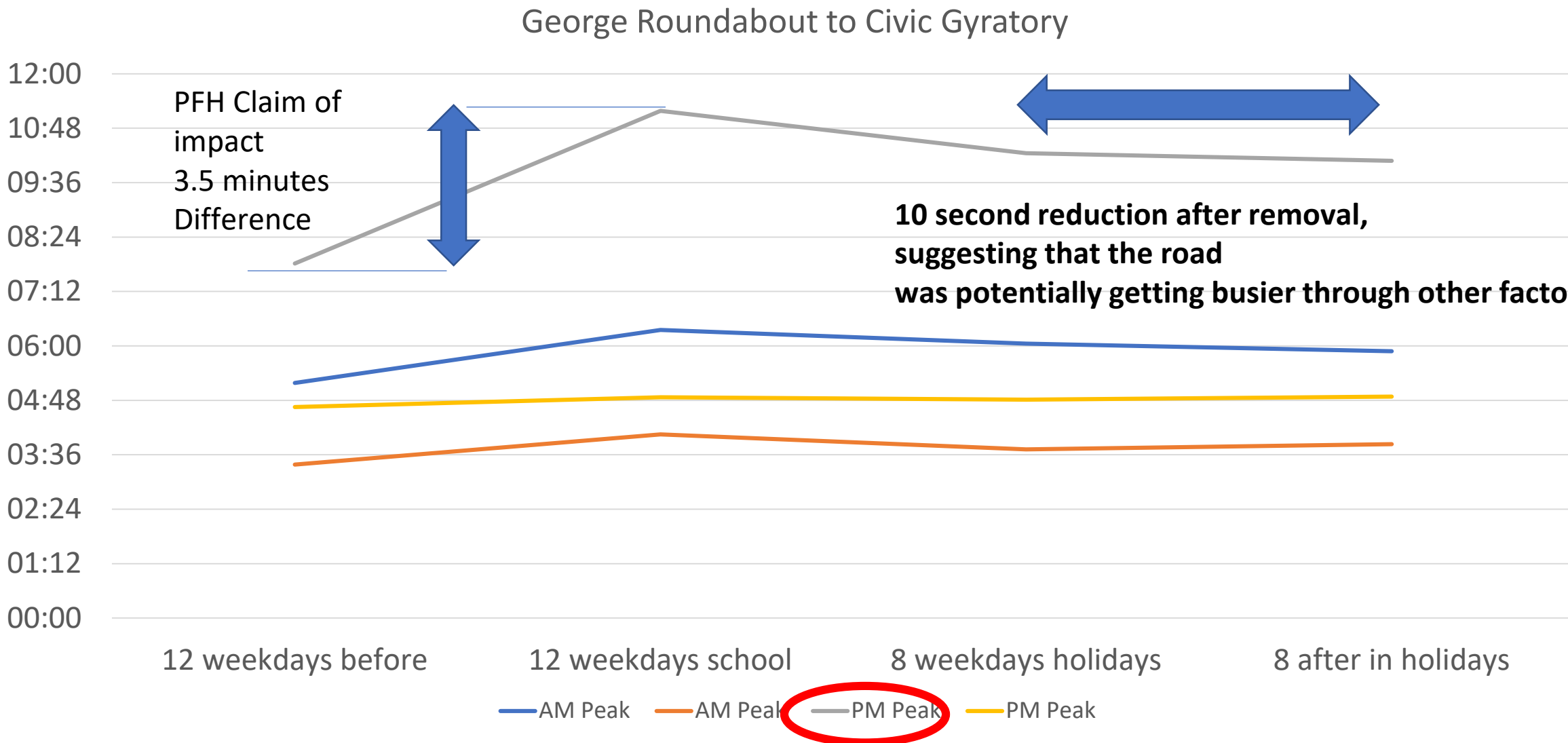
Traffic Evaporation – a well studied phenomenon

- The most comprehensive study of the phenomenon of disappearing or “evaporating” traffic was carried out by Sally Cairns, Carmen Hass-Klau, and Phil Goodwin in 1998 and followed up in 2002. See below and [here](#).
- This brought together experience from 70 case studies of roadspace reallocation from general traffic, across 11 countries, with opinions from 200 transport professionals. It shows that traffic does not behave like water moving through pipes, finding an easier path as another narrows. Instead it is a force of human choice, driven by people making all sorts of different decisions when driving conditions change.
- In half of the case studies, there was a 11% reduction in number of vehicles across the whole area where roadspace for traffic was reduced, including the main roads.

<https://londonlivingstreets.com/2019/07/11/evaporating-traffic-impact-of-low-traffic-neighbourhoods-on-main-roads>

A35 Transit between George Roundabout and Civic Gyratory

including Parkstone Road alongside park



Financial impact claim is false

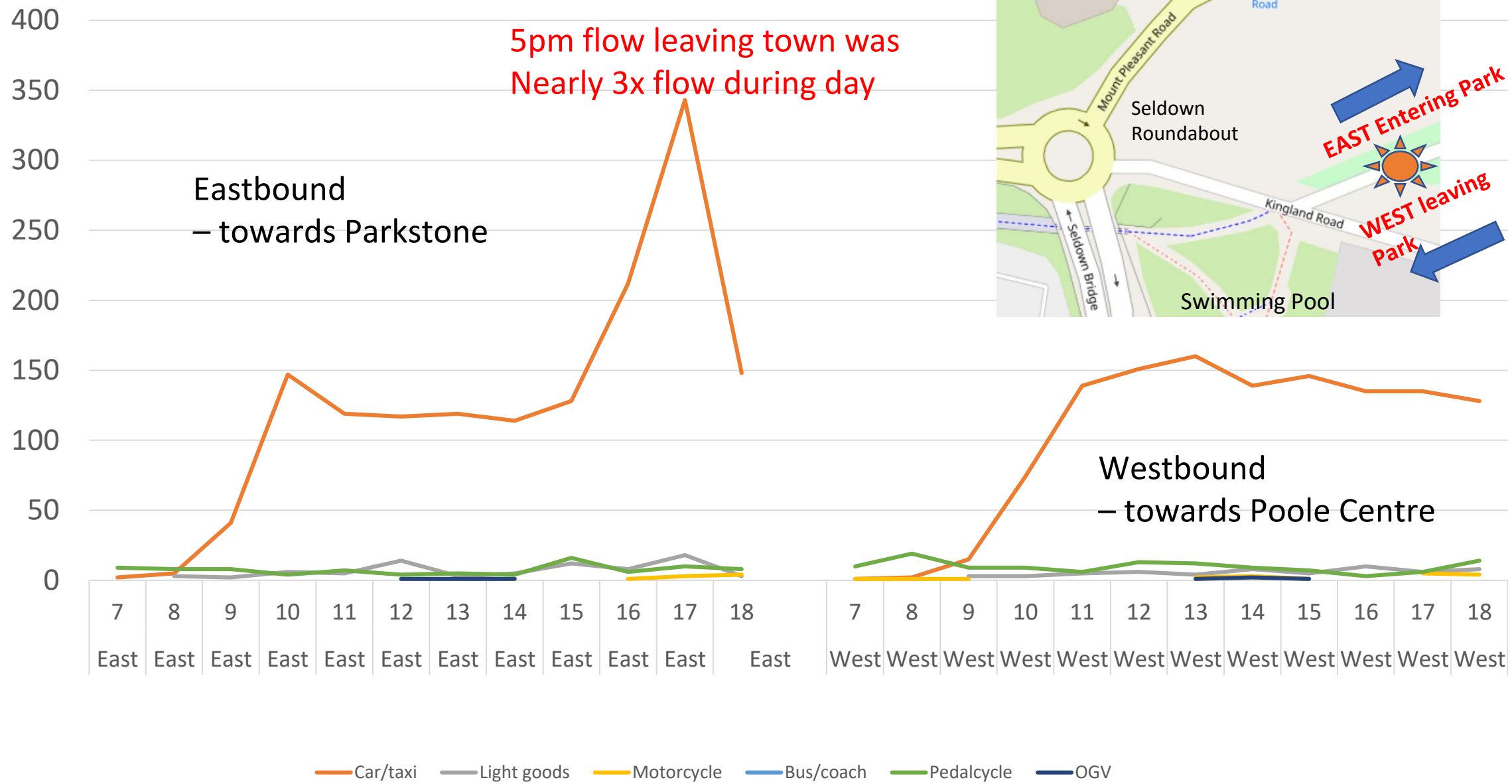
- Time delay on A35 Parkstone Road is not 3.5 minutes – overstated
 - Displaced cars – not 510, as stated. Leisure estimated half that number were “passing through” park – overplayed
 - No account was made of the economic value of tranquillity and safety for play in the park
-
- Implication is that its fine to sanction use of Poole Park (which is leisure land, and not public highway), and residential roads beyond as an overflow for the A35 main road through Poole
 - An increased number of flat developments in Poole Old town with no outdoor space rely on Poole Park and Baiter for any leisure space

The next 4 slides show traffic counts

Imperfect information, but the best we have

- May 2016 – Evening Eastbound rush hour almost tripled traffic level through park compared to during day
- Aug 2020 – Afternoon/Evening study at Twemlow shows levels using Keyhole bridge and Twemlow Avenue (but no through traffic from town)
- Feb 2021 – ongoing monitoring on full park re-opening shows
 - daily profile with no evening peak (Twemlow has some traffic, but no 5pm peak)
 - Visitors needing to access the park by car are using both the East Gate and Twemlow Avenue unhindered, **not as PFH suggested** “much smaller cohort of older and less mobile unable to use park”

Poole Park West Lodge entrance May 2016

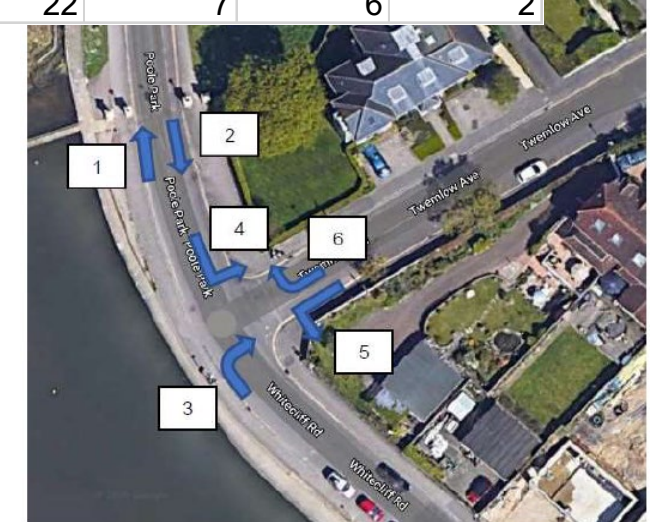


Junction of Twemlow Avenue 17 Aug 2020

- before Keyhole Bridge was closed (BCP Officer count)

17/08/2020		Movement 1		Movement 2		Movement 3		Movement 4		Movement 5		Movement 6	
		Whitecliff to Poole Park		Poole Park to Whitecliff		Whitecliff to Twemlow		Poole Park to Twemlow		Twemlow to Whitecliff		Twemlow to Poole Park	
		Cars	Cyclists	Cars	Cyclists	Cars	Cyclists	Cars	Cyclists	Cars	Cyclists	Cars	Cyclists
15:30	15:45	6	5	17	6	7	0	15	1	4	1	4	0
15:45	16:00	4	2	4	0	2	0	12	1	0	0	0	0
16:00	16:15	10	1	15	2	5	0	9	0	1	0	0	0
16:15	16:30	1	7	7	3	5	0	7	0	2	2	0	0
16:30	16:45	6	5	7	3	1	2	6	1	1	0	0	2
16:45	17:00	5	4	14	2	9	0	3	0	2	0	2	0
17:00	17:15	4	3	4	2	5	0	9	0	3	1	0	0
17:15	17:30	7	3	12	5	3	0	4	0	1	3	0	0
17:30	17:45	4	1	7	5	3	0	6	0	6	0	0	0
17:45	18:00	4	1	7	2	4	1	3	1	2	0	0	0
		51	32	94	30	44	3	74	4	22	7	6	2

What was the setting ?	Summer holiday, a fine weather day.
	Roadworks in middle of the park, anyone arriving via East Gate has to leave this way. No Vehicle access from Seldown.
What does this tell us about car movements ?	Almost double outbound from park than inbound (afternoon and all traffic from East Gate).
	Half the inbound to Twemlow is coming from the bridge direction (could be having parked by lake, or residents)
What does it tell us about bike movement ?	Mostly straight in and out of park, equally
	About 1/3 the volume of car movements



“no evidence of increase of use”

Keyhole Bridge manual counts							
3:30 pm to 18:00 pm		2.5 hours					
Cycles	Into Park	out of park	of which	to Harbourside	Up Whitecliff		
Mon 17-Aug-20	32	30				Count by officers	
						Summer Holiday	
Mon 22-Feb-21	42	50		27	23	Count by a volunteer	
	131%	167%				February Half term week	
Pedestrians							
Mon 22-Feb-21							
Adults	178	189		156	33		
Children	22	32					
Push chairs	4	2					

We asked in vain whether there were counts, so a volunteer undertook one

Significant increase in cycling, despite it being winter months

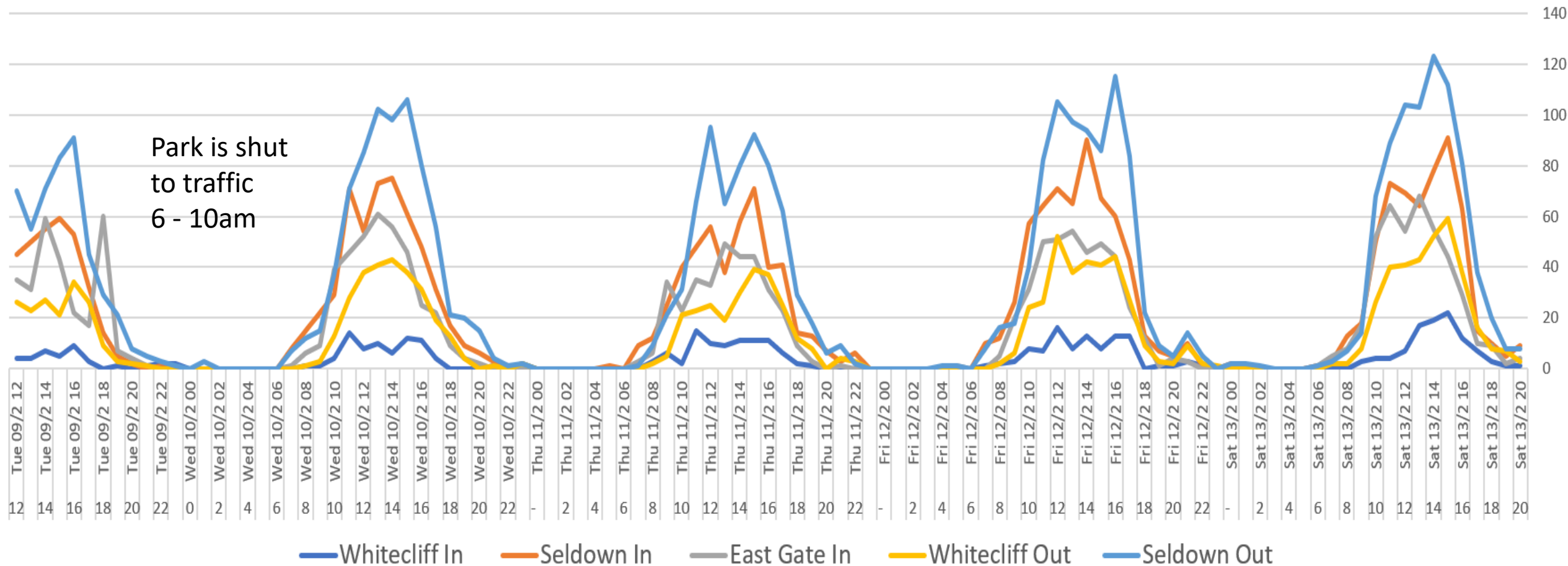
Very significant pedestrian flows

Current vehicle flows through park entrances Feb 2021

Peaks at 11am and 3pm, no evening peak

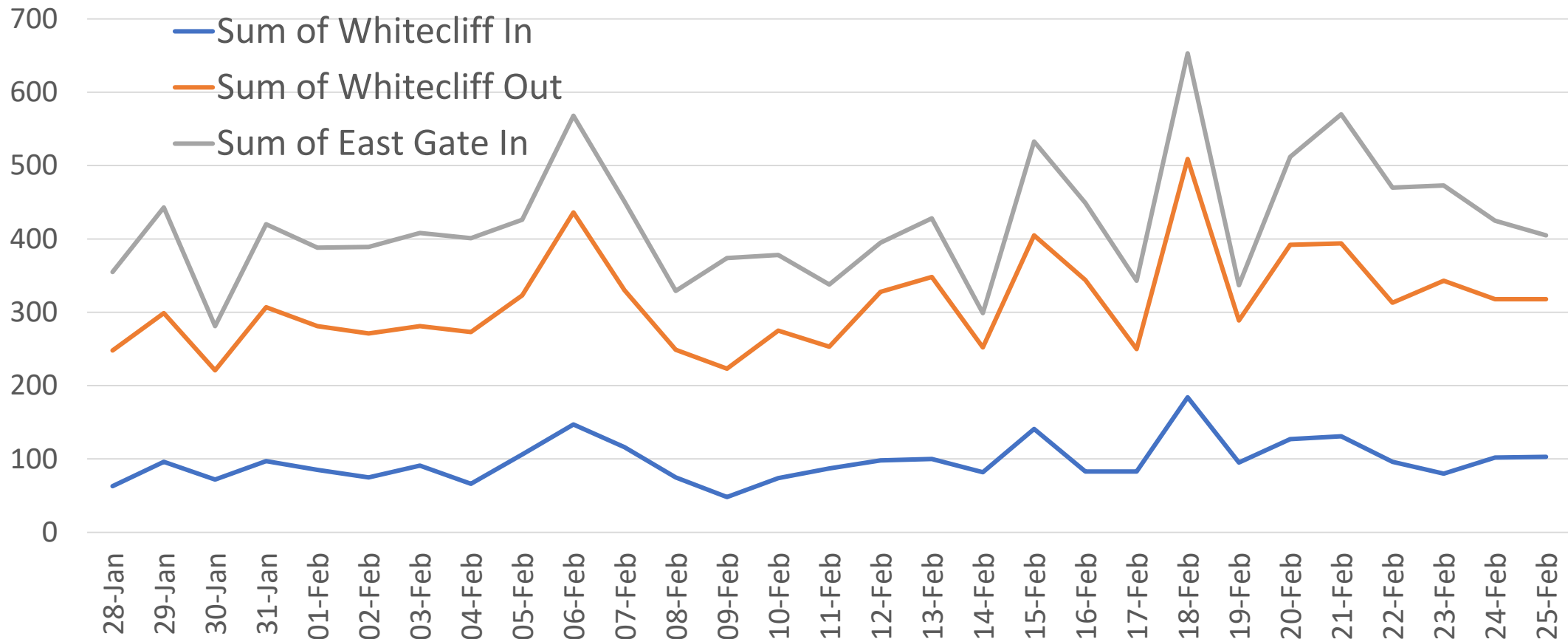
Poole Park Feb 2021

Park is shut
to traffic
6 - 10am



Motorised Access is retained at East of park - Feb 2021

(Not as PFH claimed “much smaller cohort of older and less mobile unable to use park”)



East Gate entrance - circa 400 cars per 12 hour day inbound

Circa 300 exit via Whitecliff (Twemlow Avenue), (in May 2016 estimate there were 200 in one hour)

Circa 100 enter via Whitecliff (Twemlow Avenue)

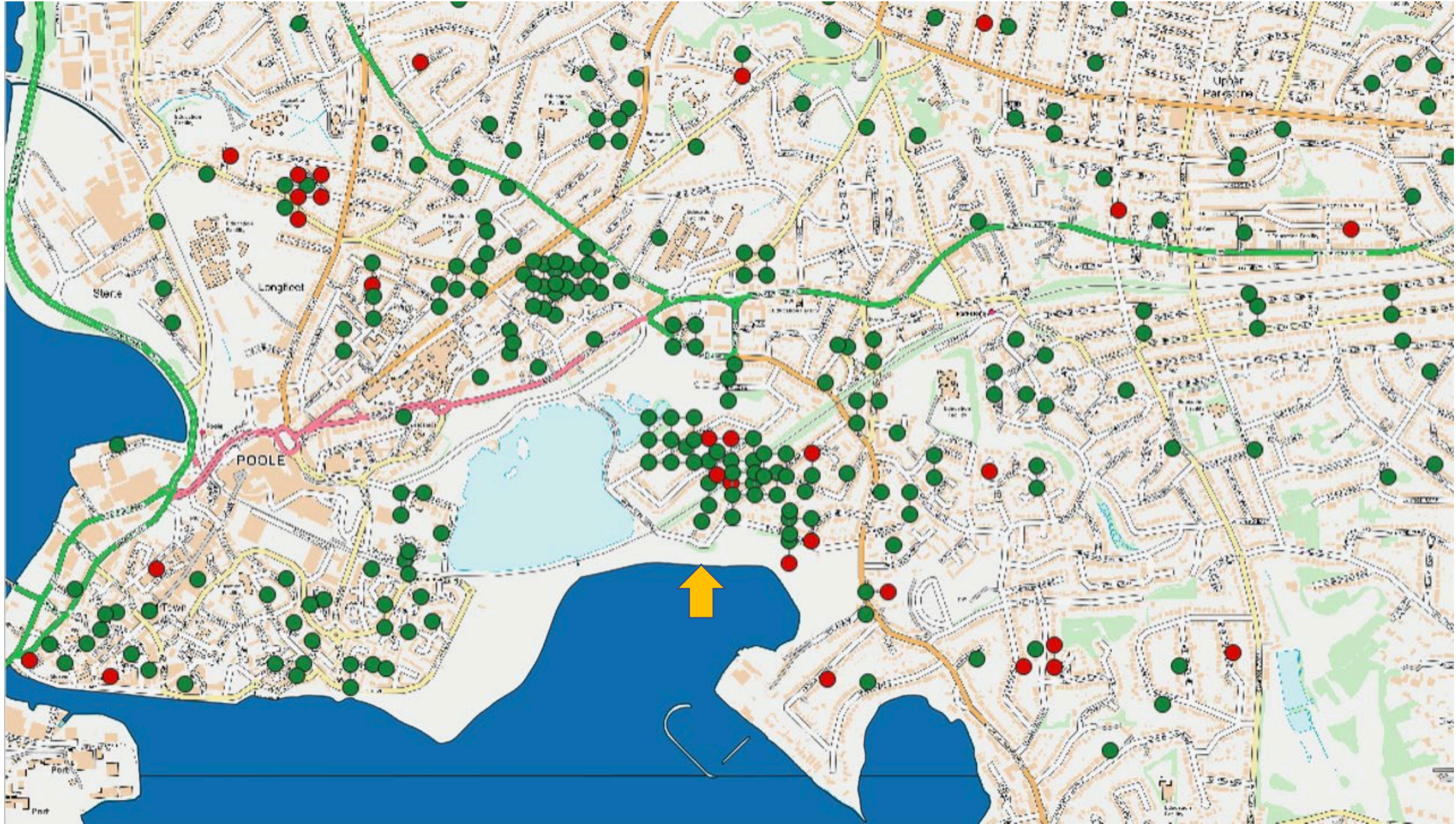
(d) Consult properly and take professional advice from Officers

In the final decision statement, the portfolio-holder is openly critical of the professional advice given in papers his officers prepared, and that he himself signed off for the draft to go to consultation.

- The Decision Impact Assessment and Equalities Impact assessment both favoured retaining the measure
- The PFH has overridden and not taken the professional advice.
- 87% of respondents to the “Draft decision to reopen” favoured keeping the park closed. Some expressed anger and confusion at having to respond multiple times. The change of response address, and shortened consultation do not represent proper consultation.
- Nature of comments is more important than numbers, but next slide shows distribution of respondents, overwhelmingly favouring keeping the measure.

Public Responses to PFH decision

- Keep keyhole bridge closed
- Re-open bridge to traffic



(e) Decision is at odds with national, strategic and local policy and guidance

Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset Local Transport Plan 2011 to 2026



Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR
Tel: 0300 330 3000

Web Site: www.gov.uk/dft

Our Ref:
Your Ref:

27 May 2020

**Transforming
Cities Fund**
South East Dorset City Region

Strategic Outline Business Case



To Local Transport Authority Officers

Emergency Active Travel Funding Indicative Allocations

On behalf of the Department of Transport, I am pleased to give details of the indicative allocations for the first stage of the emergency active-travel fund [announced on 9 May](#). This new funding is designed to help you use pop-up and temporary interventions to create an environment that is safe for both walking and cycling in your area. Active travel allows people to get around whilst maintaining social distance and will have an



Chart 8: "Comparing now to before there was a confirmed case of coronavirus in the UK, how much are you using the following modes:"

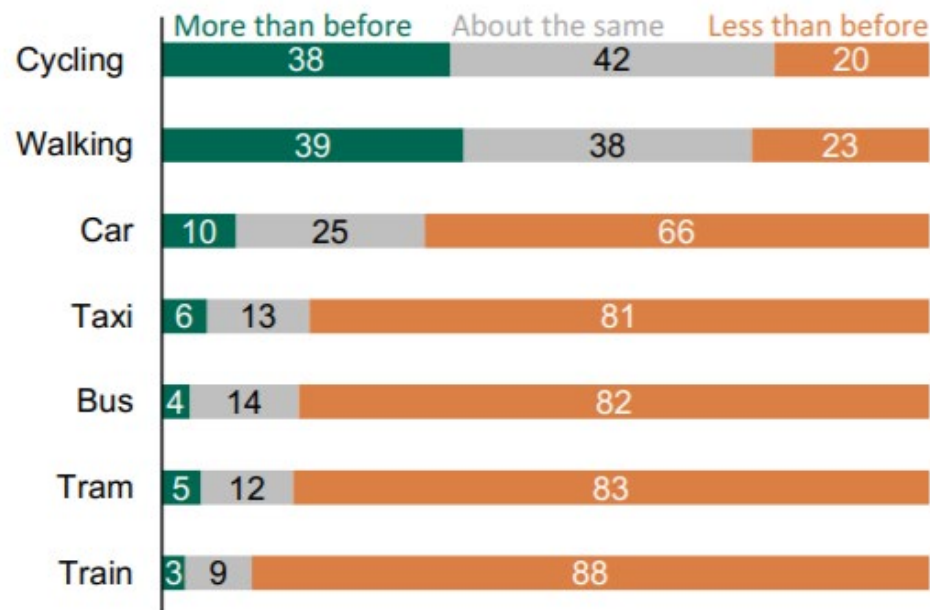
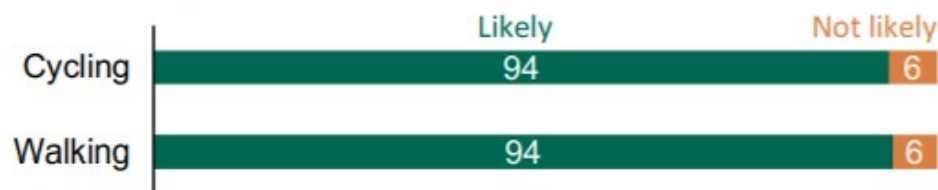


Chart 9: "How likely, if at all, will you continue walking or cycling more after travel restrictions and social distancing are removed?"



<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-travel-attitudes-study-wave-4-provisional>

There has never been a better time to make a step change in supporting active travel



Re-opening Keyhole bridge flies in the face of the evidence, of strategy and public sentiment. This Portfolio Decision has been badly made, and I hope for a recommendation to reverse it.