

Highlights from CCC's report: Summary of 5 years' cycle counts in Royal College Street

<http://camdencyclists.org.uk/2019/08/summary-of-5-years-cycle-counts-in-royal-college-street/>

The main points were presented at our members meeting and it was suggested that I write a very brief summary of the 'highlights' for Camden officers. In addition, I have produced some more recent counts to give more details of the increase in numbers of cycle journeys since Midland-Judd opened.

1. An annual increase of more than 20% in cycle journeys on Royal College Street (RCS) started in August 2016 and continued until July 2017



Figure 1: Original Royal College Street counter: monthly counts over five years May 2014 - May 2019.

Figure 1 compares the number of journeys per month (in both directions) counted for the five years since the original counter at the southern end of RCS was installed in April 2014. It indicates that:

- between August 2016 and July 2017, there was an average increase of about 23% over the previous year – comparing equivalent months¹;
- after that (until May 2019), the monthly counts showed no significant increase between one year and the next².

The counts for 2018 (red line) suffer a significant drop in February and March which could be attributed to the very cold weather at the end of February and 50% more rainfall than average in March 2018.

Conclusion: it looks as though the northern extension of RCS, which was completed in June 2016, attracted new people to use the route on RCS.

¹ Comparing equivalent months, i.e. from August - December comparing 2016 (mauve line) with 2015 (turquoise line); and from January - March comparing 2017 (green line) with 2016 (mauve line)

² Comparing equivalent months: i.e. from July - December comparing 2018 (red line) with 2017 (green line) and from January to May comparing 2019 (turquoise line) with 2017 and 2018 (green and red lines)

2. Changes in the counts since the opening of Midland - Judd Road in May 2019

This calculation is severely impeded by the unreliability of the Pancras Road cycle counter which intermittently produces unfeasibly low values³; we therefore decided to reject any weekly count in which a weekday count fell below 1000⁴ with the result that no comparison of pairs of equivalent weeks in 2018 and 2019 was possible until the first week in July, since when, all has been well with that counter.

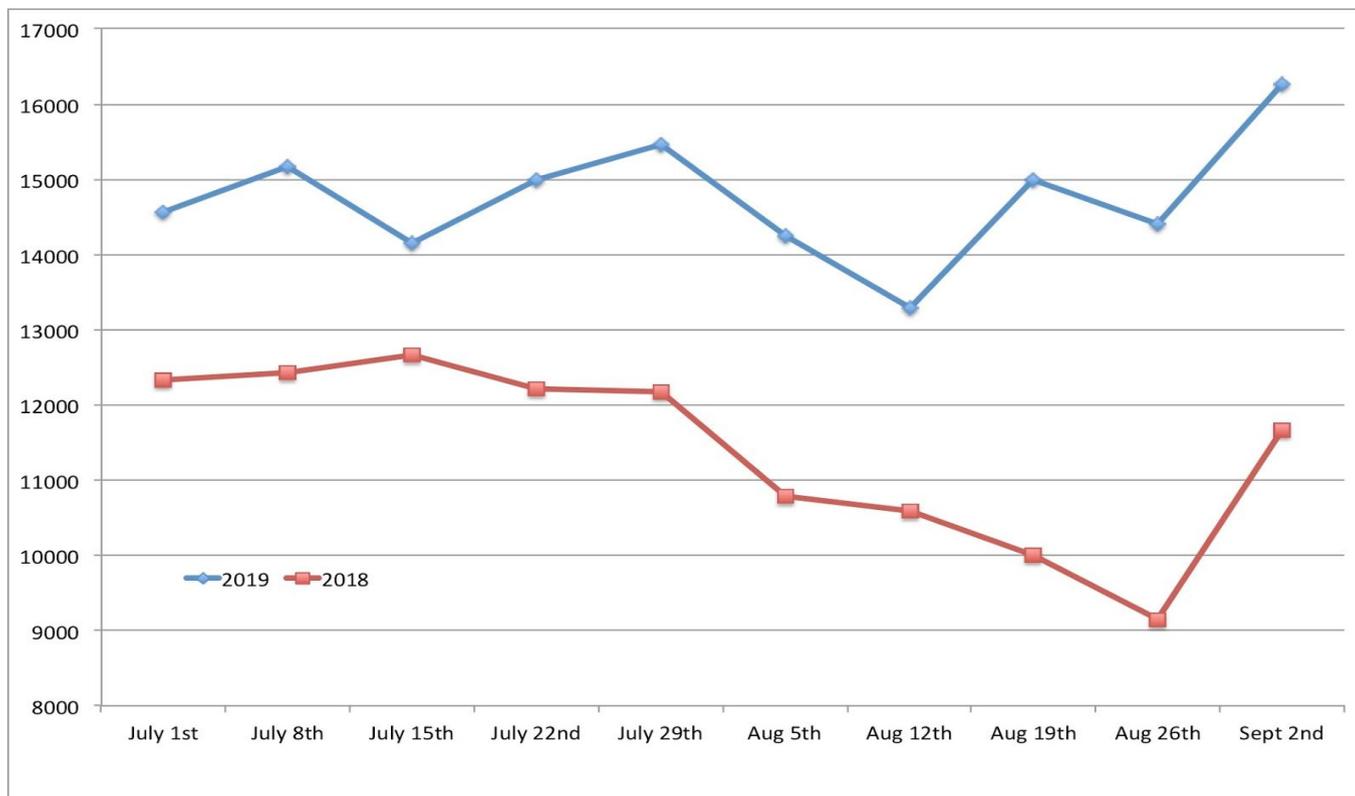


Figure 2: *Pancras Road weekly counts 1st July – 2nd Sept 2019 compared with equiv weeks in 2018*

Figure 2 shows the number of cycle journeys per week counted on Pancras Road for weeks starting on 1st July - 2nd September 2019 compared with those in the corresponding weeks in 2018:

- This brief period of ten weeks (during which the counts appear to be reliable for both years) shows an average increase of about 29% over the previous year (comparing equivalent weeks).
- That is, there appears to be a significant increase in the number of journeys on Pancras Road.

Questions:

- are these journeys just people moving from the Somerstown route or are they journeys involving new people?
- On 21st May 2019 we carried out a manual count of cyclists at around 9 a.m. which indicates that although there were more on Midland Road than on Ossulston Street there are plenty of people who might change their route:

<i>Per hour</i>	SB	NB	Total
Ossulston Street	260	40	300
Midland Road	332	49	372

We decided to look at recent counts on RCS to establish whether they too had increased.

³ Figure 9 in our original report shows daily values were zero between 13th February and 22nd March and dropped almost to zero on June 3rd.

⁴ On RCS, 'weekday' counts fell below 1000 only between 21st Dec and 2nd Jan and on Bank Holiday Mondays.

What could we discover from the two counters on Royal College Street?

Work in Royal College Street to replace the planters took place from 8th July -16th August with cyclists diverted away from the cycle tracks so they couldn't be counted at the original counter.

- We therefore looked at a comparison of the total number of weekly journeys recorded by the original RCS counter for 20th May–1st July 2019 compared with equivalent weeks in 2018 but were unable to reach any conclusions: one week in May and much of June 2019 had heavy rainfall while a significant increase was observed in the other weeks.

Unfortunately the original RCS counter has failed to record any northbound journeys since 16th July.

- We looked at a comparison of the total number of **southbound** weekly journeys recorded by the original RCS counter from 12th August–2nd Sept 2019 compared with equivalent weeks in 2018. For these four weeks we could see *an average increase of about 24%*.

We then looked for evidence from the counter on RCS north of Camden Road.

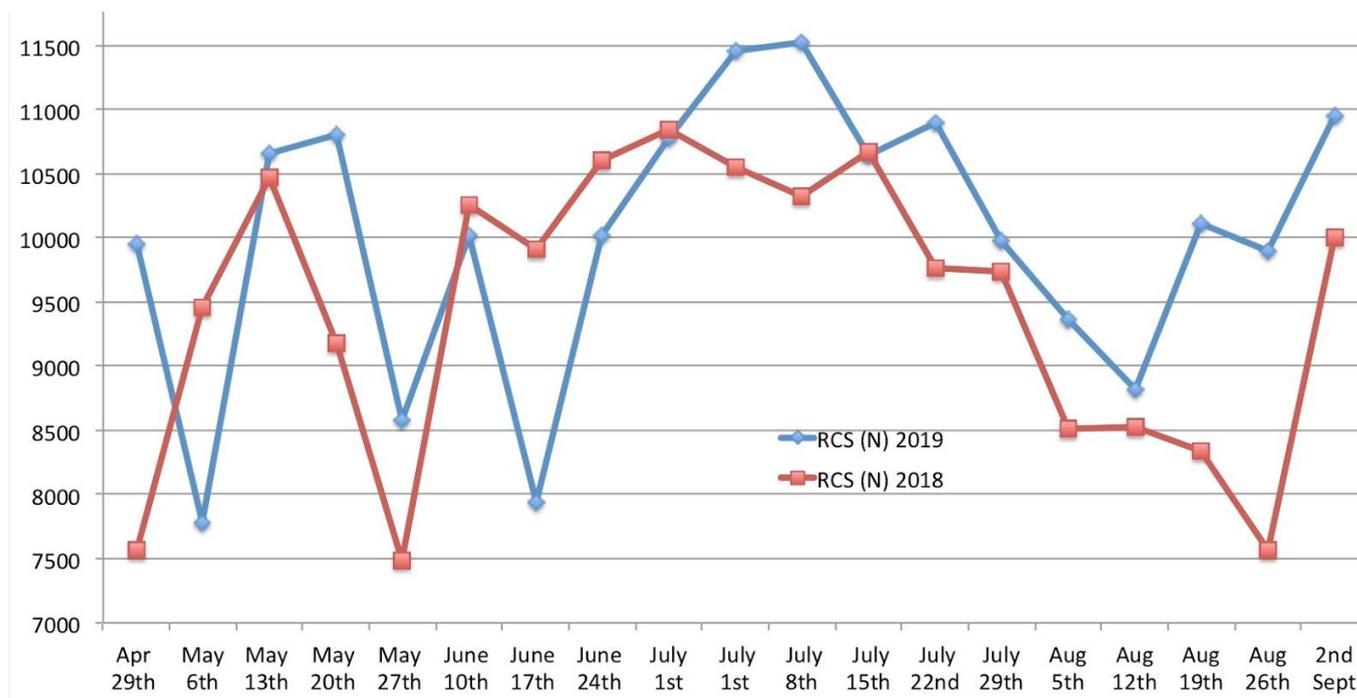


Figure 3: RCS (N) weekly counts 29th April – 26th Aug 2019 compared with equiv weeks in 2018

Notes on Figure 3 which is using data from the counter RCS (N) which is on Royal College Street north of Camden Road:

- The average increase over these 18 weeks is about 6%;
- A lot has been going on, including heavy rain in the first three weeks of June and the second week in May 2019;
- The weekly counts for 2019 have been higher than those in the corresponding weeks in 2018 since the week starting on 1st July, with an average increase of about 11%.

We suggest tentatively that this increase may be due to new cyclists heading for Midland Road

Summary of the findings for the period of ten weeks starting on 1st July:

- Pancras Road: showed an average increase of about 29% over the previous year;
- RCS (N): showed an average increase of about 11% over the previous year.

Tentative conclusions: since the new infrastructure was installed in Midland Road, the number of cycle journeys has increased in Pancras Road with some transferring from the Somerstown Route and the others being new journeys on the Royal College Street route together with other access routes (e.g. St Pancras Way and Goodsway).