



**TRANSPORT
SCOTLAND**
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

CONCESSIONARY TRAVEL – CUSTOMER FEEDBACK RESEARCH YEAR ONE REPORT



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**Lorna Shaw
Research Resource**

**Emma Hewitt
ODS Consulting**

Transport Scotland 2013

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Finally, the Research Advisory Group for the study provided us with valuable advice, support and expertise. Thank you.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Research Resource and ODS Consulting were commissioned by Transport Scotland to undertake customer research into the Concessionary Travel Card Scheme. The research involved a large scale telephone survey and a series of focus groups with people who had a range of different needs. The aim of the research was to obtain information on:

- current use of the NEC;
- views of the administration and management of the NEC
- misuse of NEC's;
- value of the NEC; and
- overall satisfaction with the National Entitlement Scheme.

The telephone survey was undertaken with 3,127 NEC card holders and companion NEC holders. A sample was drawn from the Concessionary Card's contact mailing list of those who had ticked the 'data sharing box' on their application form. Quotas were set on the basis of card type and by Local Authority to ensure that the data was robust and representative of the overall population.

Eight focus groups were undertaken with NEC holders across Scotland. The aim of the focus groups was to explore the views of the National Entitlement Card scheme in depth, to supplement the telephone survey. A total of 66 participants attended the focus groups which were spread across a mix of locations and also included a range of people with different experiences and backgrounds, in addition to age and disability.

This executive summary highlights the key findings from this programme of research.

Satisfaction

Satisfaction was extremely high with regards to the Concessionary Travel Card Scheme with almost all survey respondents being very or fairly satisfied with the scheme overall. This was reiterated in the focus groups where participants were in general highly satisfied with the card and all aspects of the scheme.

Satisfaction with the scheme was further explored at the focus groups where participants were asked to rate various aspects of the scheme. All participants gave high scores, with the exception of some wheelchair users who felt that the bus driver's lack of disability awareness had a negative impact on their experience.

Application and Administration of the Scheme

The application process was well received with 83% of survey respondents stating they found the process of applying very or fairly easy. Focus group participants did not report any problems in terms of the application process. However, one participant with a visual impairment commented that the application form was not easy to complete because the boxes were too small.

Similarly, the renewal process was thought to be easy with 63% of those who had renewed their card stating they found the process very or fairly easy, 2% stating it was neither easy nor difficult and 3% stating it was very or fairly difficult. The remaining 33% of respondents could not remember. Focus group participants had mixed views on whether there should be the opportunity to renew the photograph. Some people liked that they did not have the hassle of getting another photo, while others did not like that their photograph was out of date.

The deaf focus group participants did have some strong views about the renewal process. They were dissatisfied that they had to reapply, given they had a 'permanent, lifelong condition' and they were also required to attend a hospital appointment to have a test that proved their level of hearing loss. These participants felt that this was unfair and inconvenient.

Only 8% of survey respondents had visited the Transport Scotland website and only five participants from the groups said they had accessed it. Of those who had used the website, 90% said the information on the website was very or fairly helpful. One comment from a focus group participant with visual impairments indicated that the site however, was not easy to navigate.

How the card is used

The research identified that most people used their NEC for bus travel with 86% of respondents stating they use their card in this way. This was substantiated in the focus group findings where most people used their NEC for bus travel and this included local buses as well as intercity buses.

In terms of the frequency of use, 4 in 10 respondents said they used their card for bus travel at least 4 times per week. This was less likely to be the case in the HITRANS Regional Transport Partnership area where NEC holders stated that they used their card less frequently.

There was no real consistency in the times of day when the NEC was used with 48% of respondents stating that there was no main time of travel or that the times of day that they travel varies. However, 38% of respondents stated they used the NEC late mornings between 9am and 12 noon.

The survey revealed that the main reasons for travelling when using the concessionary travel card were for shopping, leisure and attending medical appointments. This was confirmed at the focus groups with participants stating they used their NEC for a number of different types of journeys. In particular focus group

participants cited shopping, visiting friends and family, as well as attending hospital or medical appointments as the main reasons for travelling with their NEC.

With regards to the distance travelled, 19% of respondents said they use their card for local travel, travelling less than 5 miles, 39% used their card to travel between 5 and 25 miles and 19% used their card to travel 25 or more miles. Furthermore, 17% of respondents said that the distance they travel varies and 7% said they did not know or could not remember. At the focus groups some participants had used their card to travel outwith their own local authority area, for example taking day trips to cities such as Glasgow or Edinburgh from Aberdeen, Inverclyde or Stirling.

Most survey respondents said that they would state their destination to the driver as they boarded the bus (83%). During one focus group with five older participants it was felt strongly that stating the destination was necessary in order to cut down on, what they believed, was the fraudulent recording of journeys by the bus company, in order to claim more money from the Government. During discussions in four other focus groups, twelve participants commented that their ticket did not always reflect their destination, but this was rarely challenged.

Of those who said they did not show their photo, 16% said that the driver would ask to see their photo. Very few focus group participants said that they were asked to show their photograph on their NEC when boarding the bus. The only group who were routinely asked to show their cards were participants in the deaf group. These participants believed that because they did not 'look disabled' and their card had no identifier to state they were deaf; the drivers thought they were fraudulently using someone else's card.

The majority of survey respondents and focus group participants were not aware of any examples of misuse. The survey revealed that awareness was low regarding being able to report abuse of the scheme to Transport Scotland's helpline with only 26% of survey respondents being aware of this.

Benefits of the scheme

Survey respondents were asked about what they believed were the most important aspects of the Concessionary Travel Card scheme and which one thing was most important to them. Just under 1 in 4 respondents said that the main important aspect of the scheme for them was the financial savings with 39% stating this was most important to them. This was followed by giving the individual independence or freedom (20%), allowing the respondent to get out of the house (14%) and allowing the respondent to get to places that they wouldn't be able to park their car (14%).

The focus groups explored the benefits of the scheme in more depth to further understand what aspects of having a NEC were most important to them. Financial savings were mentioned by every group as being a key benefit of the scheme. Some participants said that they had made considerable savings by travelling with the NEC.

Equally the financial savings were a motivating factor for travel as the bus was free to use. This was thought to be particularly good for older people who then did not need to worry about the cost of travelling.

Other benefits of the scheme, mentioned spontaneously during all eight discussion groups was the ability to get people 'out and about', which was thought to reduce social isolation and keep older people active. Young disabled people mentioned having increased confidence and independence as a key benefit of the scheme.

The card was thought to have made a difference to people's health and wellbeing in that it encouraged people to be active, without the worry of paying for travel. Eight participants across five groups suggested specifically that without the card, their health would suffer as a result of not being out and about. Some suggested that without the card they would not be motivated to go out as much.

It was also suggested that the NEC scheme had helped to contribute to a reduced need for health services as older people are more inclined to be out of the house and keeping active, because of the card. This was mentioned spontaneously in two focus group discussions held with older participants.

The card also encouraged people to travel more widely than before, exploring parts of Scotland they would not otherwise have accessed because of the cost of getting there.

The NEC was also considered important for the future. Both older and disabled participants agreed that the card would become more important to them as they aged and they believed they would come to rely on it more to keep them active. For some disabled participants, driving a car was not an option for them because of the extent of their disabilities. These participants said that the card would be their means of travelling independently.

Without a card, people described their circumstance as being poorer financially, with worse health and less confidence to be out and about.

1. INTRODUCTION

About This Report

- 1.1 This report sets out the findings from mixed methodology research exploring the views of National Entitlement Card (NEC) holders. The research comprised a large scale telephone survey of 3,127 NEC holders and eight focus groups. Transport Scotland Commissioned Research Resource, working in partnership with ODS Consulting to undertake the research. The research findings will help provide valuable insight into the use and value of the National Entitlement Card.

Research Context

- 1.2 The Scotland-Wide Free Bus Travel Scheme for Older and Disabled people was introduced in April 2006. The scheme operates nationally, permitting free bus travel on any registered bus service. The scheme is open to anyone who lives in Scotland and who is either 60 years old or more, or who meets certain disability criteria and have applied for, and received a National Entitlement Card (NEC).
- 1.3 The disability criteria include:
- Disability Living Allowance under the higher rate of mobility or higher/middle rate of care;
 - attendance Allowance;
 - living in a care or residential home or hospital;
 - being a Blue Badge holder;
 - being profoundly or severely deaf;
 - having a visual impairment;
 - being told not to drive based on medical grounds;
 - mental illness, learning difficulty or personality disorder that is recognised under the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 and has lasted for more than a year;
 - having a terminal illness;
 - having a progressive degenerative condition. Conditions such as Parkinson's Disease that impede your mobility entitle you to free bus travel;
 - the loss of one or more limbs; or
 - an injured veteran with mobility problems.
- 1.4 The take up levels of the National Concessionary Travel Scheme are high. Just over 1.2 million older and disabled people in Scotland have a National Entitlement Card for free bus travel. Data from Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics¹ from 2011 identified that approximately 85% of all the concessionary cards were for the over 60s (about 1,050,778 cards) with the remaining 15% for disabled and companion cards. The National scheme

¹ www.sns.gov.uk

replaced a variety of local schemes which had been in operation since the 1960s.

- 1.5 The Scottish Government has been exploring how the National Concessionary Travel scheme can be improved and developed since 2009. A review of the Scheme in 2009² undertook a postal survey and qualitative research with its users. This revealed that the National Concessionary Travel scheme was highly valued, particularly for local travel and reduced a sense of isolation in older people. It has also explored issues around setting the reimbursement rate for transport operators involved in the Scheme.³
- 1.6 There is, however, very little evidence about how older and disabled people use their National Entitlement Card to access concessionary travel. Transport Scotland commissioned Research Resource and ODS Consulting to undertake research to explore how people in Scotland use their National Entitlement Card and to assess their experiences of concessionary travel.

Research Aims and Objectives

- 1.7 The overall aim of the research was to collect customer feedback from card holders on their use, and perception, of the scheme as well as on its administration.
- 1.8 The specific objectives were to provide evidence in relation to:
 - The application and renewal process;
 - Experience of using the NEC to access National Concessionary travel scheme and general experience of eligible cardholders who use their entitlement to free travel;
 - Transport behaviours and patterns.

² Evaluation of National Concessionary Travel Scheme, Scottish Government Social Research, Halcrow Group Ltd, 2009

³ Improving the evidence for setting the reimbursement rate for operators under the Scotland-wide older and disabled persons concessionary bus scheme, 2010, Institute for Transport Studies, University of Leeds.

2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 This section sets out our methodology for undertaking the research which involved a telephone survey, supplemented by focus groups.

Telephone Survey

- 2.2 We sought to undertake a telephone survey of 3,000 NEC holders from across Scotland. The National Entitlement Card office holds a comprehensive database of all NEC holders. Based upon the overall profile of NEC holders by card type and local authority, a representative, proportionate sample was drawn of 9,000 card holders. This was drawn from a database of those who had provided consent to data sharing for research purposes and who had supplied a telephone number to their Local Authority at the point of application.
- 2.3 An advance notification letter was sent to all 9,000 sampled NEC holders, explaining how their contact details had been obtained, reasons for undertaking the survey, and the main topics that would be covered in the survey. It also provided contact details for Transport Scotland – so that individuals could validate the survey, and also contact details for Research Resource – so that individuals could let us know about any specific communication needs for the interview process, and could request a specific interview time. The letter was sent on Transport Scotland letterhead, under an appropriate signatory.
- 2.4 Interviewing took place between the 28th of January 2013 and the 15th April 2013 with a total of 3,127 interviews completed with NEC holders. This provides data accurate to plus or minus 1.8% at the overall level (based upon a 50% estimate at the 95% confidence level).
- 2.5 The telephone survey questionnaire (Appendix 1) was designed in order to find out how card holders use their Concessionary Travel Card and covered:
- The application process and administration of the scheme;
 - Using the card;
 - How and why the card is used; and
 - Benefits of the scheme.
- 2.6 All interviews were carried out by Research Resource's fully trained and experienced interviewers. Interviews were carried out in line with Research Resource's ISO20252 accredited policies and procedures and in line with the Market Research Society Code of Conduct and the Data Protection Act.

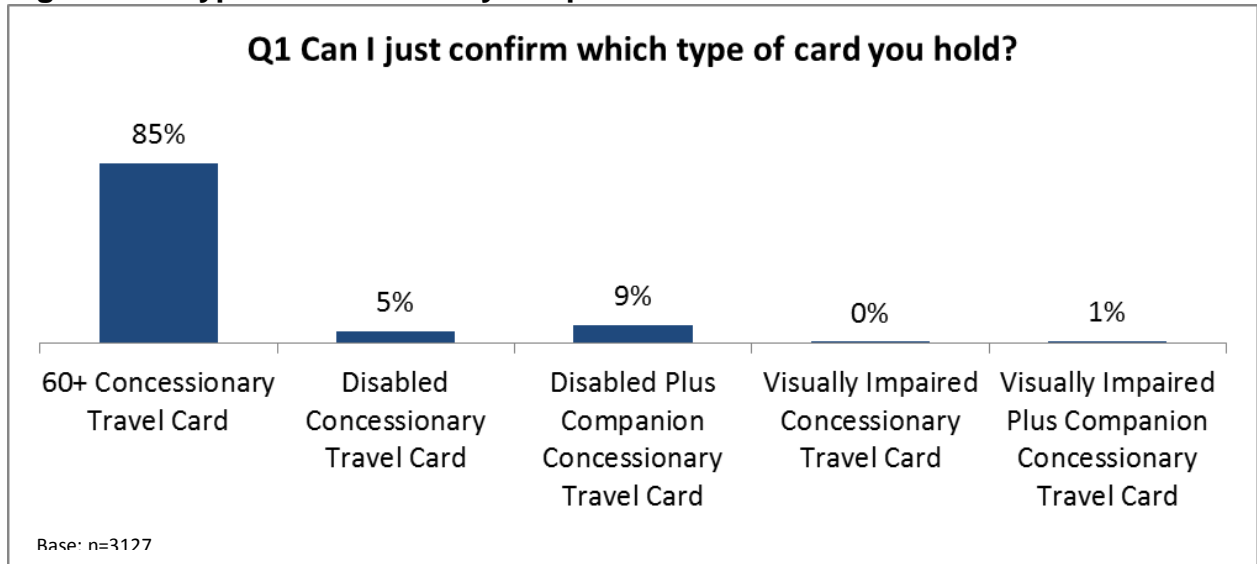
2.7 Table 2.1 shows the profile of telephone respondents, which is proportionally representative of the Card holder population.

Table 2.1: Local Authority and Cardholder Type response profile

Interview profile						
	60+ Cards	Disabled Cards	Disabled + 1 Cards	Visual Cards	Visual + 1 Cards	Total
Aberdeen City	75	18	14	1	2	110
Aberdeenshire	127	5	5	-	1	138
Angus	64	2	3	-	-	69
Argyll and Bute	58	2	4	1	1	66
City of Edinburgh	217	12	23	2	2	256
Clackmannanshire	25	2	2	-	-	29
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	18	1	-	-	-	19
Dumfries and Galloway	87	3	5	-	1	96
Dundee City	73	3	8	2	2	88
East Ayrshire	66	4	8	-	1	79
East Dunbartonshire	60	2	4	-	-	66
East Lothian	53	1	3	-	-	57
East Renfrewshire	46	3	4	-	-	53
Falkirk	119	6	5	1	1	132
Fife	195	9	28	1	2	235
Glasgow City	237	25	49	2	4	317
Highland	123	7	6	-	1	137
Inverclyde	41	3	6	-	1	51
Midlothian	45	2	4	-	-	51
Moray	50	3	1	-	-	54
North Ayrshire	80	4	9	2	-	95
North Lanarkshire	147	12	19	-	2	180
Orkney Islands	12	-	1	-	-	13
Perth and Kinross	81	1	4	-	1	87
Renfrewshire	86	5	9	1	1	102
Scottish Borders	66	3	3	-	1	73
Shetland Islands	12	2	-	-	-	14
South Ayrshire	75	5	6	-	1	87
South Lanarkshire	150	9	17	1	2	179
Stirling	46	2	2	-	-	50
West Dunbartonshire	44	3	6	-	1	54
West Lothian	77	5	7	-	1	90
Total	2655	164	265	14	29	3127

2.8 The chart below summarises the profile of research respondents by card type. In line with card holder characteristics overall, 85% of our sample held a 60+ concessionary travel card, 5% had a disabled concessionary travel card, 9% had a disabled plus companion concessionary travel card, 1% had a visually impaired plus companion concessionary travel card and less than 1% had a visually impaired concessionary travel card.

Figure 2.2: Type of Card Held by Respondents



2.9 Of note, the age profile of card holders differs depending on the type of card held. Clearly, all 60+ card holders are over 60 years of age. Of those, 81% were aged 65+ and 19% aged between 60 and 64. For disabled or visually impaired card holders, the majority were under 60 years of age (55%), 16% aged between 60 and 64 and the remaining 29% aged 65+.

Focus groups

2.10 The study involved eight focus groups with NEC holders across Scotland. The aim of the focus groups was to explore views of the National Entitlement Card scheme in depth, to supplement the telephone survey in terms of:

- current use of the NEC;
- views on the administration and management of the NEC;
- misuse of NECs;
- value of the NEC; and
- overall satisfaction with the National Entitlement Card scheme.

2.11 In total, 66 people participated in the focus groups, with an average of eight participants at each group.

- 2.12 In designing the focus groups, we considered two main factors – type of card and the group location. The research specification gave clear parameters for the study. It was to include eight groups in total. It was to include, as far as possible, a mix of card holders; so those who had a card because of their age (a 60+ card) and those who had a card because of a disability (a disabled concessionary card, or a visually impaired concessionary card). We included different types of disability in the research, for example, people with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, blind or visual impairments and people who are deaf.
- 2.13 The groups took place in a mix of locations to give geographic diversity. The eight focus groups took place in seven different local authority areas⁴. Two groups took place with re-contacts from the telephone survey who had agreed to participate in a group, while six discussion groups took place with people who had not been surveyed, but who were members of existing organisations or groups. The location of the two groups with survey re-contacts was determined by those who agreed to participate, while suitable organisations and groups were sought in the other local authority areas.
- 2.14 Although qualitative research does not aim to be representative, it was important to ensure that a range of people with different experiences and backgrounds were included in the study, in addition to residential location, age and disability. The final profile of focus group characteristics was as follows:

Table 2.3: Location and Characteristics of Focus Groups

Local Authority	Special features	Source	No. of attendees
Aberdeen	60+ card holders	Re-contacts from survey	8
Edinburgh	60+ card holders	Re-contacts from survey	12
Glasgow	60+ card holder	Existing organisation	5
Glasgow	Young, Asian deaf people	Existing organisation	10
Dundee	Blind and visually impaired people	Existing organisation	8
Inverclyde	People with physical disabilities	Existing organisation	10
North Lanarkshire	People with learning disabilities	Existing organisation	7
Stirling	Young disabled people	Existing organisation	6

- 2.15 Some of the disabled participants had a ‘companion card’ which allowed them to travel with someone who could support them to travel. Of the 66 participants in the focus groups, 29 had a companion card (44%).

⁴ The local authority areas were: Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Inverclyde, North Lanarkshire, and Stirling.

Analysis and Reporting

2.16 This report details the findings of the survey for the cardholder population as a whole overall and includes, where appropriate and statistically significant, analysis of results by:

- Card type (responses from 60+ card holders were analysed in isolation and Disabled, Visual Impairment and Companion card holder responses were analysed collectively due to the small numbers involved);
- Regional Transport Partnership area; and
- demographic characteristics.

This is supported by key findings from the focus group research.

2.17 When reporting the data in this document, in general, percentages in tables have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Columns may not add to 100% because of rounding or where multiple responses to a question are possible. The total number of respondents to each question is shown either as 'Base' or 'n=xxx' in the tables or charts. Where the base or 'n' is less than the total number of respondents, this is because respondents may be 'routed' past some questions if they were not applicable.

3. THE APPLICATION PROCESS AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE SCHEME

Introduction

3.1 The research began by asking respondents about the process of getting their National Entitlement Card, covering the source of awareness of the concessionary travel scheme and the ease of application and renewals. This section sets out our findings from both the survey and focus groups on these issues.

Source of Awareness

3.2 When asked about how they first became aware of the existence of the concessionary travel scheme, more than half of respondents said this was through word of mouth (52%), 10% said it was via media and 4% said they found out from the Council or at a Council office.

Table 3.1: Source of awareness of the Scheme

Q2 How did you first find out about the existence of the Scheme?		
Base	No.	%
Word of mouth - Through speaking friends/ family/ colleagues	1630	52%
Media (TV, radio, newspaper)	313	10%
From the Council at a Council office/ One stop shop	116	4%
From my GP	79	3%
From Social Work	66	2%
My Council wrote to me directly	53	2%
At the Post Office	53	2%
Advocacy or Support Group	24	1%
From my library	23	1%
On the internet	14	0%
Hospital/ doctor/ nurse/ care worker	14	0%
From the Bus Station	12	0%
Always known about it	11	0%
Other	19	1%
Don't know/ can't remember	776	25%

3.3 Analysis by card holder type indicated that those who held the 60+ card were significantly more likely to have heard about the existence of the scheme through word of mouth with 57% of 60+ card holders stating this was their source of awareness compared to 28% of visual or disabled card holders. Those who held Disabled or Visual Cards were more likely to have heard about the scheme through their GP (13%) or Social Work (11%).

3.4 Discussion at the focus groups revealed that people had found out about the NEC scheme in different ways. Some older participants had received an application form in the post around their 60th birthday. Others were alerted to their entitlement, also by letter, but advised to go to their local library to pick

up an application form. A few older participants said that they received a letter with the card already attached and ready for use.

- 3.5 There was at least one example of where a disabled participant had not realised he was entitled to have a NEC and was told about the scheme by a bus driver. Interestingly, this participant thought that the card was for those of pensionable age (65 years).

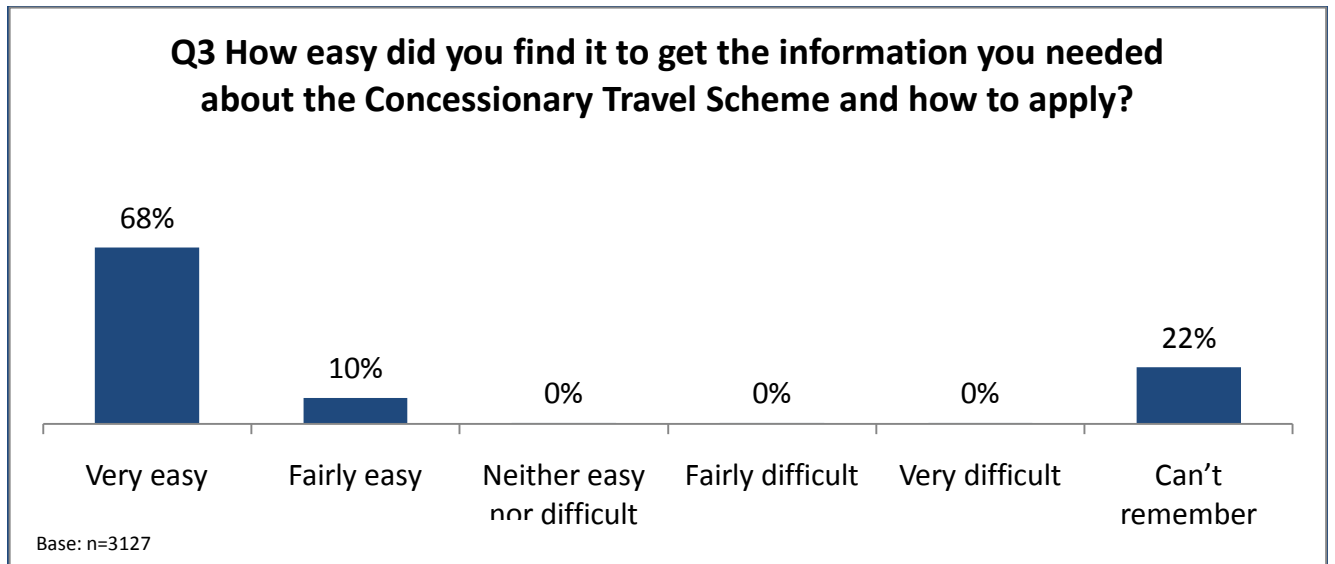
“I said, I’m not 65...but the driver said I would be eligible.”

(Male, physical disabilities group)

Ease of obtaining information and information sources

- 3.6 More than three quarters of respondents (78%) said they found it very or fairly easy to obtain the information they needed about the Concessionary Travel Scheme and how to apply, and 22% could not remember.

Figure 3.2: Ease of obtaining information



- 3.7 Analysis by Regional Transport Partnership Area indicated that respondents who lived in the Swestrans area (79%) and HITRANS area (77%) were most likely to have said they found it ‘very easy’ to find this information. Respondents in the NESTRANS area (36%) and SESTRANS area (27%) were more likely to have said that they ‘can’t remember’ how easy they found it to get information on the scheme and how to apply.

3.8 In relation to where respondents found the information they needed about the Concessionary Travel Scheme and application process, the most common sources were from the Council at a Council office or One Stop Shop (27%), at the post office (21%) or from a local library (10%). Analysis by area reveals that obtaining information from the Council was more common amongst those who lived in the Swestrans area (65%) whereas respondents who lived in the STP area were more likely to have obtained information from the Post Office (35%) than in other areas.

Table 3.3: Source of information

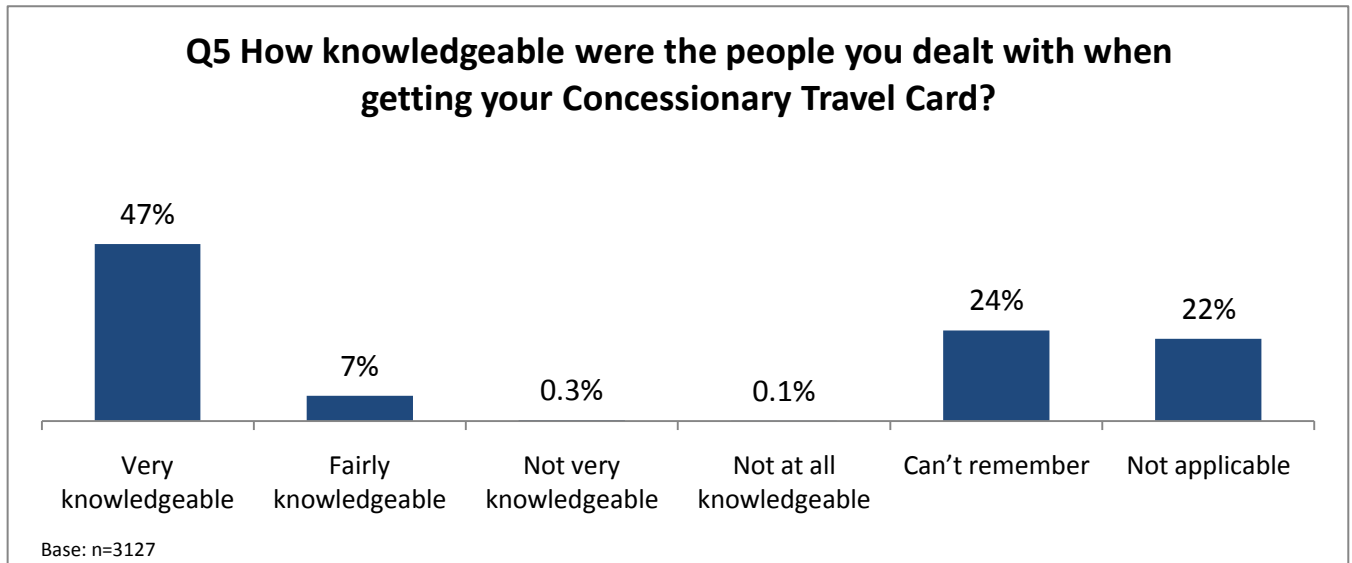
Q4 Where did you find the information you needed about the Concessionary Travel Scheme and application process? (Analysed by RTP)								
	Overall	HI TRANS	NES TRANS	Zer Trans	SES TRANS	Swes trans	SPT	TAC TRANS
Base	3127	272	248	14	923	96	1280	294
From the Council at a Council office/ One stop shop	27%	36%	35%	79%	34%	65%	14%	37%
At the Post Office	21%	24%	21%	-	3%	2%	35%	17%
From my library	10%	11%	0%	-	28%	7%	1%	3%
Word of mouth - Through speaking friends/ family/ colleagues	8%	2%	0%	-	6%	12%	13%	2%
From the Bus Station	3%	2%	1%	-	1%	2%	4%	7%
From Social Work	3%	3%	5%	-	1%	1%	4%	1%
On the internet	2%	3%	4%	-	2%	3%	3%	2%
My Council wrote to me directly	2%	3%	2%	-	2%	3%	2%	1%
From my GP	2%	1%	-	-	1%	-	2%	1%
Media (TV, radio, newspaper)	1%	1%	-	-	1%	3%	2%	1%
Advocacy or Support Group (please specify)	0%	-	0%	-	1%	-	0%	-
Hospital/ doctor/ nurse/ carer	0%	-	0%	-	0%	-	0%	-
Other	1%	-	2%	-	2%	1%	1%	1%
Don't know/ can't remember	23%	20%	29%	21%	21%	17%	25%	27%

3.9 Analysis by card type indicated that those who held disabled or visual cards were significantly more likely to have found the information they needed about the Scheme through Social Work (12%) compared to those who held 60+ cards (1%). Whereas those who held 60+ cards were more likely to have found the information they needed at the Post Office (24% of 60+ card holders compared to 3% of disabled or visual card holders).

The Application Process

3.10 For survey respondents, where respondents dealt with people when getting their concessionary travel card, the vast majority stated that the people they dealt with were very knowledgeable. More than half of respondents (54%) said the person they dealt with when getting their concessionary travel card was either very or fairly knowledgeable and less than 1% said this person was not very or not at all knowledgeable. A further 24% of respondents said they could not remember and 22% said this was not applicable.

Figure 3.4: Knowledge of people dealt with when getting Card



3.11 More than 8 in 10 respondents said they found it very or fairly easy to apply for their concessionary travel card (82%) and 1% said they found it very or fairly difficult. Analysis by card type indicated that those who held a Disabled or Visual Impairment Card were less likely to state that the application process was very easy (66%) compared to those who held a 60+ card (74%).

3.12 This was generally supported in the focus groups with general comments being that the process of application was a simple one.

"It was all very easy; it took five minutes, I filled the form in and it came in the next few days."

(Female, older person's group)

- 3.13 Findings from the focus group revealed that the application process for those with a disability was reported to be just as smooth. There were no real issues, other than having to prove their disability. Most people were able to do this through their Disability Living Allowance information.

“I had to take my DLA form in, and a birth certificate and proof of my address, then I had to wait seven days and I had to get a photo.”

(Female, young disabled group)

- 3.14 Only one participant, who had a visual impairment stated there had been an issue completing the application form, as the text was too small for her to read. On complaining at the travel centre, the staff there offered to increase the size of the form on their printer – which she said made the form ‘illegible’.

“The form is atrocious if you can’t see. I got the form at the bus station, but the writing was too small so I took it back to the station and they just photocopied it to make it bigger.”

(Female, young disabled group)

- 3.15 Others with a disability said they had needed help to complete the application form, from carers or support services. Overall there were no real issues in the completion of the form.

Replacement cards

- 3.16 16% of respondents said they have had to get a replacement card. Analysis by RTP area reveals that those who lived in the HITRANS area were least likely to have had to get a replacement card (9%), while those who lived in the NESTRANS area (19%) and SESTRANS area (18%) were most likely. This was also slightly more likely to be the case for Disabled or Visual card holders (21%) than for 60+ card holders (15%).

Table 3.5: Requirement for replacement card by RTP Area

Q7 Have you ever had to get a replacement card e.g. if your card was lost ,stolen or faulty? (Analysed by transport area)								
	Overall	HI TRANS	NES TRANS	Zer Trans	SES TRANS	Swes trans	SPT	TAC TRANS
Base	3127	272	248	14	923	96	1280	294
Yes	16%	9%	19%	14%	18%	13%	17%	13%
No	84%	91%	81%	86%	82%	88%	83%	87%

- 3.17 Of those who had applied for a replacement card, the vast majority (94%) said they found the process very or fairly easy. 2% stated that it was fairly difficult and 2% could not remember.

- 3.18 Survey respondents (13 respondents) who stated that they found the process of getting a replacement card difficult were asked why. The most common reason given for difficulty (5 respondents) was about the length of time taken to get a new one. Others stated difficulties in having to get a photograph taken (2 respondents) and difficulty in finding information/ knowing what to do to get a replacement card (2 respondents). The remaining respondents either could not remember or stated individual reasons for difficulty.
- 3.19 In the focus groups, some participants had received a new card because theirs had been lost or broken. Again, this process was fairly straightforward, with only one participant suggesting that the telephone number to register the card as lost, was printed on the back of the card – and is therefore useless.

Renewing cards

- 3.20 Disabled and Visual card holders were asked if they have had to renew their card due to it expiring. This only applied to disabled card holders. Of these individuals, just under 6 in 10 (59%) said they have had to renew their card.
- 3.21 Of those who have renewed their card, 90% said they found the process very or fairly easy compared to 5% who found it very or fairly difficult. The remaining respondents could not remember (3%).
- 3.22 Where respondents stated that they found the process of renewing their card difficult (13 respondents), the most common reason was due to the fact that on renewal there was now a requirement to provide proof (6 respondents). A number of respondents also stated that a delay in receiving the new card or timescale for processing resulted in them having to travel without their card, which caused expense and inconvenience (4 respondents). The remaining 3 respondents stated that the difficulty was due to a lack of information.
- 3.23 Focus group participants who had renewed their card were generally positive about the renewal process. Some liked the fact that the existing photograph was used, while others complained that the photo was now out of date and not a true representation of them. These participants would have liked the opportunity to update their photo at renewal stage.
- “You don’t need another photo which is great, ‘cos it’s a wee bit of a hassle.”*
(Male, physical disabilities group)
- 3.24 The blind and visually impaired group were part of an arrangement between the local council and their support group for blind and visually impaired people. Each week the support group sent their database of clients to the council, and all the paperwork for renewals was completed between the two organisations on behalf of the blind individuals.

- 3.25 The deaf participants were the only group who were dissatisfied with the renewal process. In order to renew their NECs, (every three years) they were to undergo an audiogram; a test undertaken at a hospital that checks their level of hearing. The group felt that this was inconvenient, and having to re-apply for a NEC was unfair as their condition was unlikely to change.

“We are all born deaf, and we are going to be deaf for the rest of our lives, why do we need to re-apply when we have a permanent, lifelong condition?”
(Female, young Asian deaf group)

“For deaf people, their hearing gets worse – it’s never going to improve, and certainly not to the point where I’m not deaf.”
(Male, young Asian deaf group)

Transport Scotland website

- 3.26 Just under 1 in 10 respondents (8%), had visited the Transport Scotland Website for information on the scheme. Analysis by age revealed that respondents aged 65 and over (5%) were significantly less likely to have visited the Transport Scotland website than respondents aged under 65 (16%).

- 3.27 The vast majority of respondents who had visited the website rated the information on the website very or fairly helpful (90%). Just 2% stated that the information on the website was fairly unhelpful. This equated to just 5 respondents. Comments made in relation to this were that they found the website confusing (2), that bus timetables were hard to read (2) or that they could not find the information they were looking for (1).

- 3.28 Focus group participants had very little knowledge of the Transport Scotland website. From the eight groups; five participants said they had used the website. This was thought to be for further information on where they could use their card. Other older participants questioned why they would need to use the Transport Scotland website.

- 3.29 One participant from the blind and visually impaired group reported that the website was difficult to navigate, based on the amount and size of the text.

“The website is hard to negotiate; I can see a bit, but it would be impossible with visual impairments.”
(Female, blind and visually impaired group)

- 3.30 Young disabled participants had used the Young Scot website to access information about which specific shops and restaurants accepted the card for discounts. However, it was suggested that the text on the Young Scot website was also too small for use by people with visual impairments.

“There are tiny wee boxes, and it doesn’t enlarge on the web.”
(Female, young disabled group)

- 3.31 The deaf participants commented on the need for better communication from Transport Scotland that met their needs in general. In relation to the Transport Scotland website, their view was that lots of text in English was not ideal for speakers of British Sign Language.

“Big scripts of English put us off.”

(Female, young Asian deaf group)

Summary

- 3.32 Whilst the main sources of awareness of the NEC were informal, through word of mouth, respondent’s found it easy to obtain information on, and apply for, the NEC. The knowledge of any personnel assisting in the application process was highly rated.
- 3.33 The process of getting a replacement card or renewing the card was perceived to be easy by the majority who had had to do so, however, there were some isolated circumstances where respondents had had difficulty in obtaining information or in applying for a renewed card. In particular, those applying for disabled cards were more likely to state that the requirement to provide proof of disability for renewal was problematic.

4. USING THE CARD

Introduction

- 4.1 Respondents, both in focus groups and in the telephone survey, were asked about their usage of their Concessionary Travel Card and any problems they have had in usage.

Using the card to travel by bus

- 4.2 The vast majority of respondents said they used the concessionary travel card to travel by bus (86%). Analysis by transport area revealed that this was relatively consistent across all areas with respondents in the HITRANS area were only marginally less likely to use their card to travel on the bus (84% compared to 86% overall). It is also interesting to note 60+ card holders are as likely to use their card to travel on the bus aged 60-64 as they are aged 65+.
- 4.3 These findings are in line with the focus group findings where the majority used their NEC on buses. This included local buses as well as intercity buses.
- 4.4 Those who did not use the concessionary travel card to travel by bus were asked why. The main reasons were where the respondent did not travel by bus due to a disability which prevented them from doing so (46%) or where the respondent was still driving or preferred to travel by car (33%).

Table 4.1: Reasons for not using card to travel by bus

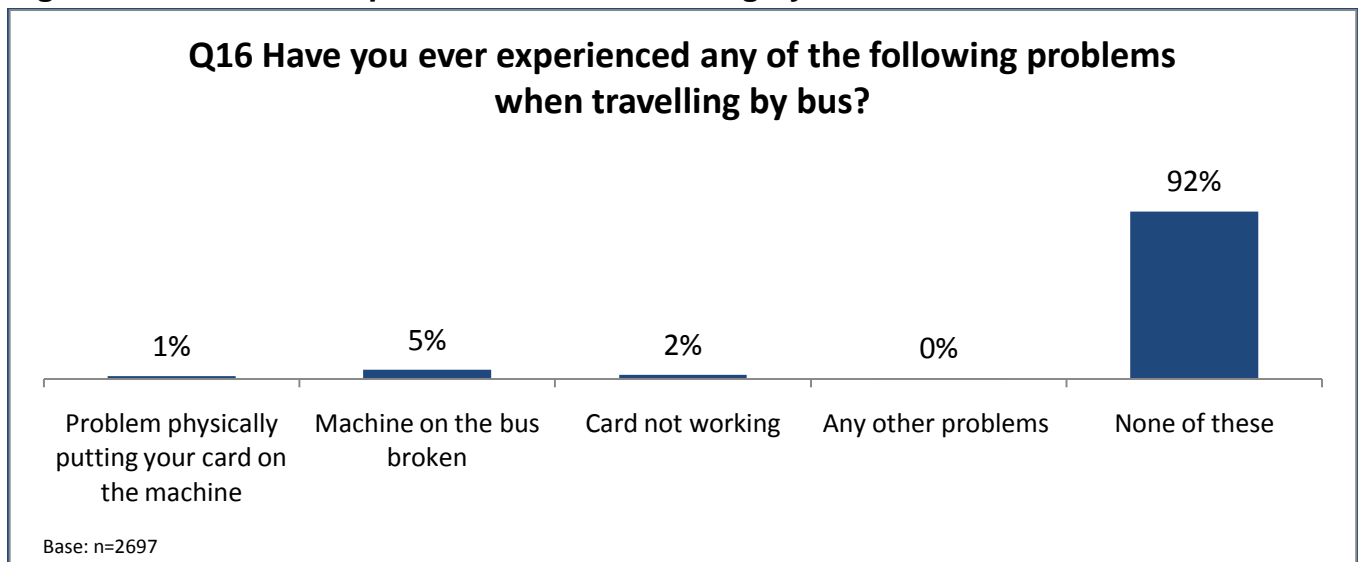
Q15 If not why not?		
Base: n=429	No.	%
Don't use public transport due to health/ disability	197	46%
Still driving/ prefer to use the car	142	33%
Use the train due to lack of bus service/ its more practical/ easier	24	6%
No need to use it	22	5%
Use taxis/ get lifts from friends	20	5%
There is no bus service where I live	17	4%
Try to walk everywhere as opposed to getting the bus	6	1%
Lost my card	5	1%
Don't like using buses	4	1%
Card expired	4	1%
Too afraid to travel by bus	2	1%

4.5 Analysis of why respondents do not use the card to travel by bus showed that respondents who had a Disabled or Visual Card were more likely to say that they did not use public transport due to their health or disability (65%) or used taxis or got lifts from friends (12%). Those who held a 60+ card were more likely to say that they were still driving or preferred to use the car (36% compared to 14% of those with Disabled or Visual Cards).

Problems experienced when travelling by bus

4.6 More than 9 in 10 respondents said they had not experienced any problems when travelling by bus. On the other hand, 5% said they had experienced a broken machine on the bus, 2% said their card wouldn't work and 1% said they had a problem physically putting the card on the machine.

Figure 4.2: Problems experienced when travelling by bus



4.7 A total of 33 survey respondents said they had a problem physically putting the card on the machine. Of these, 26 were Disabled or Visual card holders. When asked to explain the difficulty the majority stated that their mobility or ability to use their hands was reduced so that either their carer or the driver would help them to put their card on the machine.

4.8 Focus group participants described the process of getting onto the bus with a NEC. The card had to be placed onto a reader to entitle the card holder to travel. Some older participants stated that the card reader was not always easy to use. One complained that it was hard to reach, while others said that the reader made a noise once it had been accepted, but that this was “barely audible” and they often had to ask the driver if it had been accepted.

- 4.9 The blind and visually impaired participants spoke of having to hand their card over to the driver to scan on their behalf.

“I can’t find the scanner so I just give it to the driver, so I don’t hold the queue up.”

(Female, blind and visually impaired group)

“The driver takes it (NEC) for you and gives you a ticket. He asks where you’re getting off and gives you the ticket.”

(Male, blind and visually impaired group)

- 4.10 Similarly, some wheelchair users said that they gave their NEC to the driver while he set up the ramp to allow the disabled person access to the bus.

“If the driver gets out to get the ramp, I give him my pass and so I get on and get into the space and he comes back with the pass and the ticket.”

(Female, physical disabilities group)

- 4.11 The participants with disabilities commented at length about the difficulties of physically getting on and off the bus. They had regular experiences of bus drivers not knowing how to use the lift or ramps, or having to prompt them to put the ramp out for them to use.

“If my carer comes on, the driver doesn’t even acknowledge them and often they don’t even get the ramp out for the wheelchair. My carer has to help me on by tilting the chair onto the bus – that’s why I need two carers.”

(Female, learning disabilities group)

- 4.12 Equally, there were many examples of disabled spaces on the bus being taken up by pushchairs or buggies, making it difficult for wheelchair users to physically access the space on the bus. Disabled participants perceived that the drivers gave preference to prams and buggies over a wheelchair user.

“I’ve been put off the bus in my wheelchair because a buggy is trying to get on. It’s ridiculous – a buggy can close down, but not a wheelchair.”

(Female, physical disabilities group)

- 4.13 Participants with disabilities were able to recount several negative experiences they had encountered with bus drivers, relating to the bus driver’s lack of disability awareness.

“They speak to you in a voice that is not polite. They are nicer to the people who are paying. I think it’s because of the way we are.”

(Female, learning disabilities group)

“You’ve got to put your hand out for the bus to stop, which is really irritating, because I can’t always see which bus is coming so sometimes I’ll put my hand out, but it’s not the bus I want - and the driver goes mental.”

(Male, physical disabilities group)

4.14 Each group of disabled participants indicated their perception that the drivers' need to 'keep to a schedule' meant that disabled passengers did not receive a good service. For example, the blind and visually impaired participants said that despite handing their card to the driver to scan on their behalf; the driver still drove off before the blind person had the chance to find a seat.

4.15 Wheelchair users had also experienced the drivers' need to keep to a schedule while travelling with their NEC. This included instances of the bus driving past them at a bus stop while they were waiting to get on, or buses not stopping to let these passengers off once they were on the bus.

"There is a buzzer to get off. It's a different noise to alert the driver, but he forgets you're on and just carries on driving."

(Female, physical disabilities group)

"The drivers look down on you. They dread wheelchair users. They would rather drive on, or else they throw the ramp down."

(Female, physical disabilities group)

4.16 The deaf participants also commented on the lack of deaf awareness among bus drivers. One example recounted by a deaf participant was in relation to getting off the bus, and using the buzzer to indicate for the bus to stop. For example, they commented that there were sometimes no visual displays on the buses to show that the buzzer to get off has been pressed.

"The city sprinter buses have a bad attitude, especially if you want to press the buzzer to stop. There is no visual indication to say that you've pressed it. I can't hear the bell so maybe I might press it twice by accident, but this frustrates the driver and he thinks I'm being cheeky or annoying pressing it twice."

(Male, young, Asian deaf group)

They also discussed their difficulties in reading and understanding written English, as it is not their first language, as well as the obvious difficulties with audio announcements about a change to the service.

"There is a difficulty in communication. English is not our first language, so reading information is not ideal about the right (bus) times, when and where you're going and whether it's quicker to get a certain bus."

(Female, young Asian deaf group)

7 day pass

4.17 Of those who had a problem with their card (39 respondents), 16 said they handed over their card and got issued with a 7 day pass to allow them to travel before they received their new card. All 16 respondents who said they handed over their old card, said the process was explained to them clearly by the driver.

Showing identification

- 4.18 More than 8 in 10 respondents (83%) who travelled by bus with their concessionary travel card said that they show their photo to the driver when getting onto the bus. Analysis by area indicated that respondents who lived in the Swestrans (94%) were most likely to show their photo, while those who lived in TACTRANS (72%) and NESTRANS (74%) were least likely.

Table 4.3: Do you show your photo to the driver by RTP

Q20 Do you show your photo to the driver? (Analysed by transport area)								
	Overall	HI TRANS	NES TRANS	Zer Trans	SES TRANS	Swes trans	SPT	TAC TRANS
Base	2697	229	221	9	785	83	1114	256
Yes	83%	87%	74%	100%	85%	94%	85%	72%
No	17%	14%	26%	-	15%	6%	15%	29%
Don't know	0%	-	-	-	-	-	0%	-

- 4.19 Those who said they did not show their photo to the driver (454 respondents) were asked if the driver then asks to see their photo. Only 16% of these respondents said that the driver asks to see their photo.
- 4.20 The majority of focus group participants stated that they had never been asked to show their photograph to the driver. Some said that the card was there, with the photograph on the reader should the driver wish to see it – but the perception was that the driver was not interested.

“The drivers don’t pay that much attention...I have an old photo and they’ve never said anything.”

(Male, young disabled group)

- 4.21 The only group who stated that they were ‘always’ asked to show their photograph were the deaf participants. This group was made up of participants aged 18-25 years. They believed they were asked to show their photograph because they did not look disabled – and because their NEC does not carry an icon to indicate that they are deaf (unlike the blind participants whose card carries an ‘eye’ icon). This group perceived that the drivers’ thought they were fraudulently using someone else’s card.

“I put the card on and they always ask me to take it out the wallet so they can see the photo matches – I think they think I’ve borrowed it from an old person.”

(Male, young Asian deaf group)

Driver asking for destination

- 4.22 Only 8% of respondents said that the driver never asks them where they are going. The majority (72%) stated that the driver did not have to ask as either they always told them or they knew them and knew where they would be going. 12% said that the driver always asked where they were going and 5% said the driver asked most of the time.
- 4.23 Analysis by area reveals that the SESTRANS transport area had the highest proportion of respondents stating that the driver never checks with them where they are going (24%).

Table 4.4: Does the driver check where you are going by RTP

Q22 Does the driver check where you are going? (Analysis by transport area)								
	Overall	HI TRANS	NES TRANS	Zer Trans	SES TRANS	Swes trans	SPT	TAC TRANS
Base	2697	229	221	9	785	83	1114	256
They don't have to, I always tell them	69%	80%	59%	78%	47%	84%	82%	74%
They don't have to, they know me/ where I go	3%	4%	2%	11%	2%	6%	3%	6%
Always	12%	8%	27%	-	12%	7%	11%	13%
Most of the time	5%	4%	8%	-	8%	1%	2%	4%
Only occasionally	2%	1%	2%	-	4%	1%	1%	2%
Never	8%	1%	1%	11%	24%	-	1%	0%
Can't remember	1%	1%	1%	-	3%	-	0%	-

- 4.24 Focus group participants had different experiences of discussing their destination with the driver. Most participants said that they would state their destination to the driver as they boarded the bus – without waiting to be asked.

“They will maybe ask you where you're going, but I usually just tell him before he has time to ask.”

(Male, young disabled group)

- 4.25 One group of five older participants felt very strongly that passengers should state their destination to the driver. They believed that the bus companies were falsely registering journeys in order to “reclaim more money from the Government”. This was based on their belief that the ticket issued by the driver did not always correctly state the start and end point of the journey.

“The driver puts it through terminal to terminal, instead of the actual journey.”

(Male, older person's group)

“(Has anyone ever challenged the driver over the ticket?) Yes, I say ‘no pal, that's wrong...and they say ‘oh sorry’ and give me another ticket, but I'm sure that ticket gets passed to the next person.”

(Male, older person's group)

- 4.26 Four other focus groups discussed that their ticket did not always reflect the journey they had asked for. Some people justified this by saying that the journey prices are in 'stages' and the ticket destination shows the 'stage' of the journey at which you boarded the bus. Others believed this was a 'scam' by the bus companies.

"I took a bus to Port Glasgow but they gave me a ticket for Greenock. That is a dearer fare."

(Male, physical disabilities group)

- 4.27 Participants from the young, Asian deaf group stated that they were always asked for a destination by the driver. This caused frustration and stress for these participants as they were unable to communicate with the driver.

"With the old card, I just had to show the driver and it was ok, I was never asked for a destination, but now the driver always asks and I say 'I'm deaf' and I try to smile so I get a good response from the driver."

(Female, young Asian deaf group)

"It used to be you showed your card and you got waved on, now you're asked for a destination."

(Male, young, Asian deaf group)

Misuse of the card

- 4.28 Only 1% of respondents said they had seen or experienced abuse or misuse of the bus pass. The South West has the highest proportion of respondents stating they have seen or experienced misuse of the bus pass. When asked about the type of behaviour they had seen or experienced, in the main, respondents stated that they had seen younger people using the card as opposed to people aged 60+.
- 4.29 Just over one quarter of respondents (26%) said they were aware that they can report abuse of the scheme to Transport Scotland's hotline. Respondents who lived in TACTRANS area (33%) and HITRANS area were most aware of this (32%) and respondents in the Swestrans area least likely to be aware (17%).
- 4.30 The majority of focus group participants were not aware of any examples of misuse. It was suggested that different people "have different types of passes" and so it was difficult to tell whether someone was using a NEC fraudulently.

4.31 Three participants admitted to having more than one card. One had moved into a different local authority area and was issued with a second card. Two participants, on receipt of their original card, had registered it as lost, and were sent a replacement. The original card was not cancelled and could still be used. One participant said that this was a ‘stand by’ in-case he lost the first card, while the other participant had given the second card to friends to allow them to travel together for free.

“It’s really easy to misuse it, they never check the photo.”

(Female, physical disabilities group)

4.32 Some felt that the new card was much better and not open to misuse. There were examples of people stating that the old card and photograph could be “peeled back” and another photo inserted. Overall the perceptions of misuse were not high.

“It’s unlikely to be abused because of the photo.”

(Male, older person’s group)

Other uses of the National Entitlement Card

4.33 More than a third of respondents (37%) said they had used their travel card for other things than bus travel. These individuals were asked what other uses they had for their travel card, with the majority stating they use it for train travel (69%).

Table 4.5: Other uses of National Entitlement Card

Q26 What else do you use your card for?		
Base: n=998	No.	%
Train travel	693	69%
Identification	161	16%
Library	90	9%
Leisure services	86	9%
Swimming	51	5%
Ferry	42	4%
Subway	4	0%
Coach travel	2	0%
Taxi card	1	0%

4.34 Analysis by aged revealed that respondents aged under 60 were significantly more likely to use their card for swimming and train travel. Aligned with this, Disabled and Visual card holders were also more likely to use their NEC for these activities.

4.35 Geographical analysis indicated that respondents living in the SPT RTP area were significantly more likely to state that they used their card also for train travel. Those living in HITRANS and ZetTrans RTP areas were significantly more likely to state that they used their card for Ferry travel.

4.36 There were differences in participants' awareness of the use of the card for activities other than travel. Two groups of older participants had the greatest awareness of using the card for other activities and had used it to access museums, swimming and the cinema at discounted prices.

"For entry into museums and art galleries."

(Male, older person's group)

4.37 None of the participants with learning disabilities knew of these additional benefits, and neither did the participants from the young Asian deaf group. Some older participants said that the additional benefits of the card "are not communicated well". This was thought to be because some older people are not frequent users of the internet and are therefore not picking up information about where to use the card. One group of older participants suggested that they had to find out for themselves about the additional benefits.

4.38 In some local authority areas, the card could also be used to give discounted travel on trains, and for some people this was their personal preference for travelling. Participants in Aberdeen noted that a separate rail card was required for discounted rail travel in this area.

"You have to pay for the train, but it's quicker than the bus."

(Female, young Asian deaf group)

4.39 Some participants had used the card to travel "on the boat". This referred specifically to short ferry trips to Dunoon or Rothesay, whereby once on the bus, card holders are not required to disembark and can travel "for free" to these locations. This research did not include anyone from the Western Isles where holders of the NEC are able to receive free ferry journeys to the mainland under the scheme.

"Once you're on the bus, you don't need to get off to get on the ferry."

(Male, physical disabilities group)

4.40 Other participants recounted their use of the card for dial-a-bus services, whereby a bus collects and drops-off passengers from their home address. Only recently had this service requested to see passengers' National Entitlement Cards.

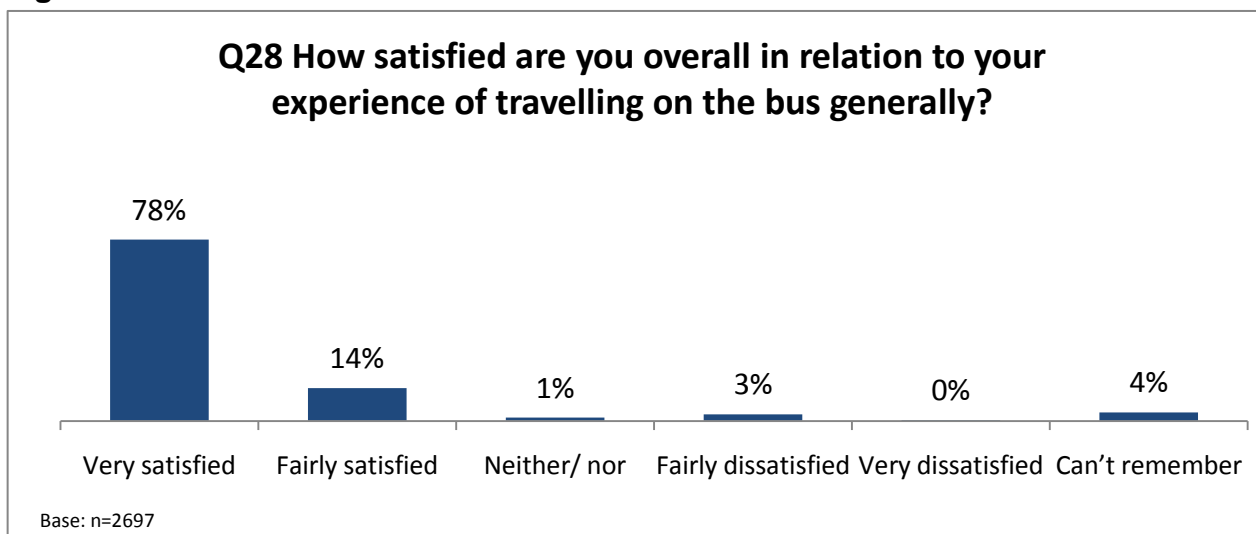
Companion cards

4.41 Those who had a companion card (n=297) were asked how often they had someone travelling with them as their companion. Just under 4 in 10 of these individuals (39%) said this was every time they travelled, 24% said it was most of the time, 20% said some of the time, 4% said rarely and 4% said they never have a companion travelling with them.

Overall satisfaction with bus travel

4.42 More than 9 in 10 respondents (92%) expressed satisfaction in relation to their experience of travelling on the bus generally compared to 3% who said they were dissatisfied.

Figure 4.6: Overall satisfaction with bus travel



4.43 Whilst there are clearly very low levels of dissatisfaction, analysis by RTP area revealed that HITRANS and ZetTrans had the largest proportion of respondents stating they were very satisfied. On the other hand, those who lived in the NESTRANS (67%) had the lowest proportion stating they were very satisfied.

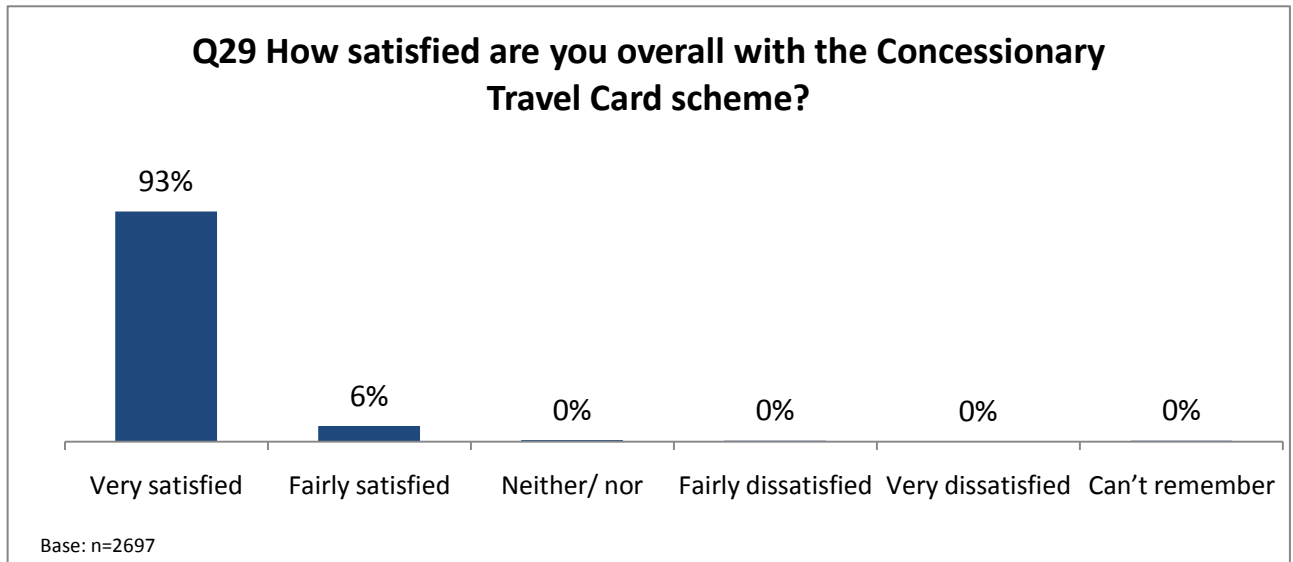
4.44 Disabled and Visual card holders were marginally less likely to be 'very satisfied' with bus travel overall than 60+ card holders (71% compared to 79% very satisfied).

4.45 Those who were dissatisfied (n=89) were asked to give their reasons for feeling this way. The main reasons given were by respondents who said the route or timing of the buses were inconvenient (17 respondents), that buses were unreliable (13 respondents), the accessibility of buses for those with a disability or mobility issues (13 respondents) and where buses were perceived as being old, dirty, unpleasant or uncomfortable to travel in (10 respondents).

Overall satisfaction with Concessionary Travel Scheme

4.46 Following on from this, respondents were asked how satisfied they were overall with the concessionary travel card scheme. Satisfaction was extremely high with 99% of all respondents stating they were either very or fairly satisfied in this respect.

Figure 4.7: Overall satisfaction with the Concessionary Travel Card scheme



4.47 The NESTRANS area had the lowest proportion of respondents stating they were 'very satisfied' when compared to other areas (84%). Again, respondents holding a Disabled or Visual Impairment card were less likely to state that they were very satisfied (88%).

4.48 This high level of satisfaction was mirrored at the focus groups where participants in the eight focus group discussions were highly satisfied with the National Entitlement Card and all aspects of the scheme. The participants were keen to ensure that there were no planned changes to the scheme as all wished to preserve it.

"I am 100% thrilled"

(Female, older person's group)

"I feel good that I live in a country that has this scheme."

(Male, older person's group)

Summary

- 4.49 The National Entitlement Card is widely used, with the majority of respondents using it for bus travel. A significant minority are also using the NEC for other purposes including train travel, leisure purposes, identification or other methods of travel. Almost all respondents were satisfied with the Concessionary Travel Scheme.
- 4.50 Overall, the experience of travelling by bus was very satisfactory. Respondents could identify very few problems when travelling by bus, although, disabled respondents were more likely to be able to identify problems in relation to accessibility of bus travel and the attitude of drivers and other passengers.

5. HOW AND WHY THE CARD IS USED

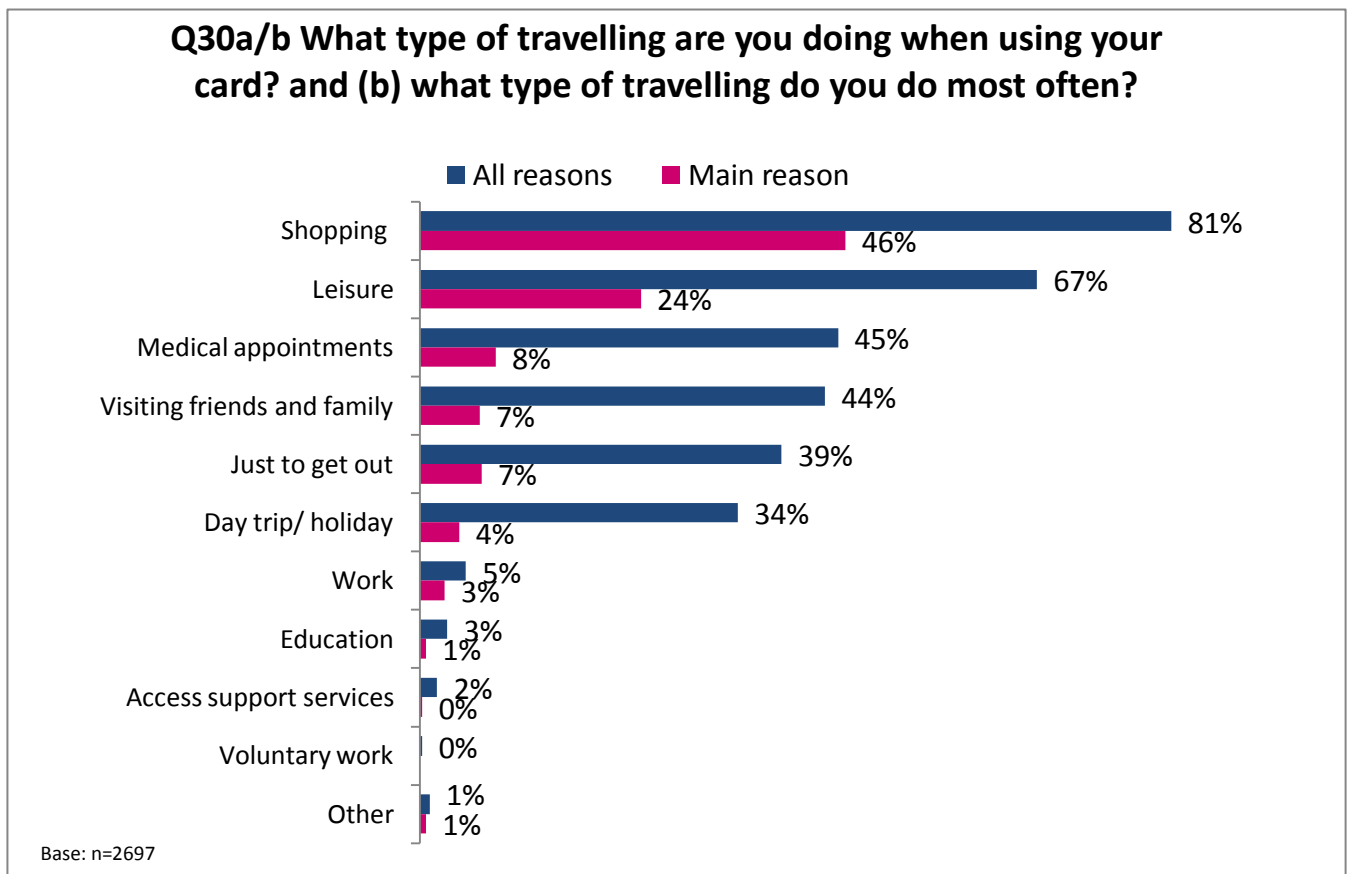
Introduction

5.1 Respondents were asked about the type of travelling that they did when using the card, in order to develop a picture of how and why the card was used.

Reasons for travelling

5.2 Respondents were asked about the type of travelling that they do when using the card. More than 8 in 10 respondents said they use the card for shopping, 67% use it for leisure, 45% use it for medical appointments and 44% use it for visiting friends and family. In terms of the main reason for using the card, again shopping was the most popular response (46%), followed by leisure (24%) and medical appointments (8%).

Figure 5.1: Reason for travelling done when using the card



5.3 There was, unsurprisingly, a significantly lower proportion of those aged over 65 using their card for work purposes, with just under one in ten respondents aged under 60 (8%) stating that they used their card most often for work purposes.

- 5.4 Analysis by card type indicated that those with Disabled or Visual cards were more likely use their card for medical appointments (20% compared to 6% of 60+ card holder).
- 5.5 Card holders with the 60+ card were more likely to use the card most often for social and leisure purposes with 84% stating that they use their card most often for shopping, leisure, visiting friends and family or day trips/ holidays. This is compared to 60% of Disabled or Visual card holders.
- 5.6 Focus group participants used their NEC for a number of different types of journeys. Typical reasons for travel included shopping, visiting friends and family, as well as attending hospital or medical appointments. Some of the younger participants were attending college, or had volunteering jobs and regularly travelled by bus to access these.

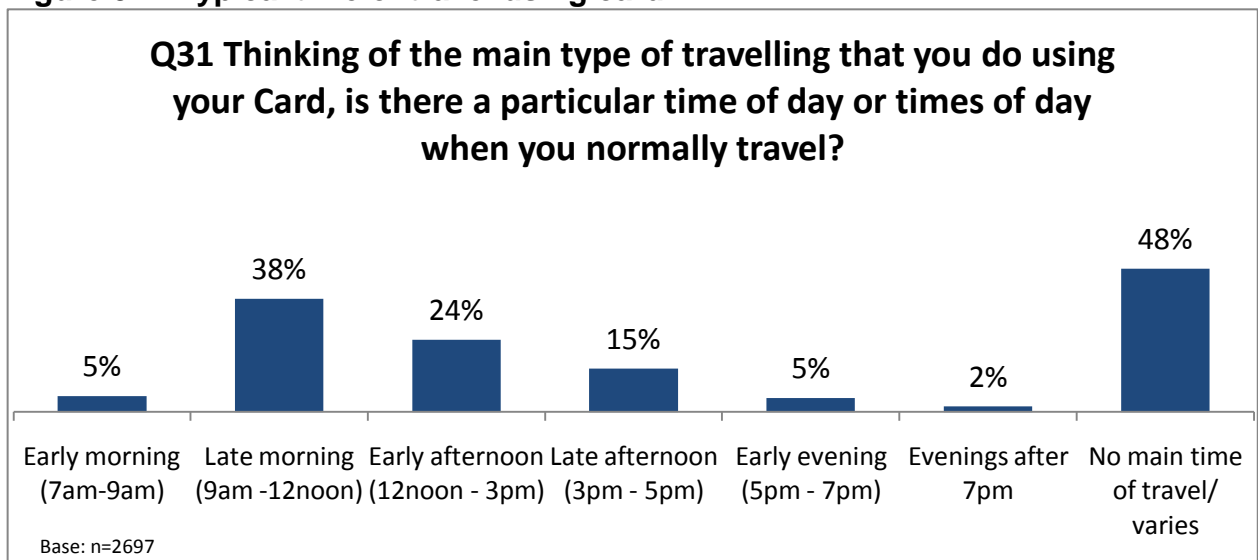
“I use mine quite a lot. Three days a week I volunteer and on a Friday I do my shopping.”

(Male, young disabled group)

Typical time of day of travelling

- 5.7 When asked about the typical time that they travel when using their card, just under half (48%) said that there was no main time of travel and that it varies. On the other hand, 38% said they typically travel late morning between 9am and 12 noon. In line with the type of travelling that they are doing, respondents aged under 60 were more likely to travel early morning (12%) than older age groups.

Figure 5.2: Typical time of travel using card



- 5.8 The focus group findings revealed that there was no real consistency in the times of day when the NEC was used. Some people used it in the morning and others for “the occasional evening”. However some participants commented that they did not like to use the bus at night, and would prefer a taxi in these circumstances.

“At night I would take the bus and go to the pictures.”

(Male, learning disabilities group)

“I take a taxi when I go out on a Saturday night, I’m not confident at night on the buses.”

(Female, blind and visually impaired group)

Distance travelled

- 5.9 When asked about the sorts of distances normally travelled varied when using the card, 19% said they typically travel less than 5 miles, 21% said between 5 and 10 miles, 18% said 10 to 25 miles and 19% said more than 25 miles.
- 5.10 Analysis by area revealed significant differences in the distance travelled with respondents who lived in HITRANS (34%), ZetTrans (33%) and SwesTrans (31%) areas were most likely to use their card for longer distances of 50 miles or over. This is compared to the SPT area where 49% used their card to travel less than 10 miles and just 5% to travel distances of 50 miles or over.

Table 5.3: Distance travelled when using the card by RTP

Q32 What sort of distance do you normally travel when using your card (Analysis by transport area)								
	Overall	HI TRANS	NES TRANS	Zer Trans	SES TRANS	Swes trans	SPT	TAC TRANS
Base	2697	229	221	9	785	83	1114	256
Under 1 mile	0%	0%	1%	-	-	-	1%	-
1 to under 2 miles	3%	1%	4%	11%	2%	2%	4%	2%
2 to under 5 miles	16%	9%	13%	11%	18%	17%	18%	13%
5 to under 10 miles	21%	12%	14%	-	19%	18%	26%	24%
10 to under 25 miles	18%	14%	10%	44%	19%	15%	19%	20%
25 to under 50 miles	9%	16%	15%	-	6%	16%	6%	13%
50 miles and over	10%	34%	16%	33%	6%	31%	5%	11%
No normal distance of travel/ varies	17%	14%	15%	-	21%	1%	18%	13%
Don't know/ can't remember	7%	0%	13%	-	10%	-	5%	6%

- 5.11 Some participants at the focus groups had used their cards to travel outwith their own local authority area. Journeys to cities such as Glasgow or

Edinburgh were commonly noted by participants in Aberdeen, Stirling and Inverclyde.

- 5.12 Some disabled participants mentioned that they would like to travel further away using their NEC, but they were concerned that there might not be a bus with suitable disabled access available to bring them back. These participants were sometimes required to book in advance, to ensure that the right equipment was available to allow them access to the bus.

“I wouldn’t take the chance further away – I’m not sure I would get back.”

(Female, physical disabilities group)

“I don’t use the bus as much as I would like to because I need to call ahead and book a space on a bus that can accommodate me, and I’m not a good planner.”

(Male, young disabled group)

- 5.13 Participants in the young, Asian deaf group indicated that they sometimes used their card to travel from Glasgow to Edinburgh. Their perception was that members of the deaf community were not aware that the card could be used to travel further away.

“Deaf people might not realise that it is a national card and that they can travel further away.”

(Female, young Asian deaf group)

“It’s a communication issue. There needs to be confidence to use the card. People use it locally because they can’t pronounce where to go or spell it.”

(Female, young Asian deaf group)

Frequency of travel

- 5.14 With regards to the frequency of travel, 26% of respondents said they typically travel by bus less than once per week, 10% said they travelled once per week, 24% said they travelled between 2 and 3 times per week, 24% travelled between 4 and 7 times per week and 16% said they travelled by bus more than 7 times per week.
- 5.15 Analysis by area indicates that those who live in the HITRANS area significantly less likely to use their card on a weekly basis than other areas. Respondents in the SESTRANS and SPT areas were most likely to travel by bus more regularly than other areas with 20% and 17% respectively stating they travel by bus more than 7 times per week.

Table5.4: Frequency of travel by RTP

Q33 On average how many bus journeys per week do you use the Card in a week (Analysis by transport area)								
	Overall	HI TRANS	NES TRANS	Zer Trans	SES TRANS	Swes trans	SPT	TAC TRANS
Base	2697	229	221	9	785	83	1114	256
Less than once per week	26%	54%	37%	67%	21%	40%	22%	22%
Once per week	10%	6%	9%	11%	8%	8%	11%	20%
2-3 times per week	24%	18%	23%	11%	24%	19%	26%	23%
4-7 times per week	24%	17%	21%	11%	27%	21%	24%	21%
More than 7 times per week	16%	6%	10%	-	20%	12%	17%	13%

5.16 Disabled and Visual card holders were more likely to travel by bus more frequently with 50% travelling by bus using their card 4 or more times per week compared to 38% of 60+ card holders.

5.17 The majority of focus group participants stated that they used their card regularly. This could be a few times a week, or for some their card was used every day.

5.18 Drivers in five of the eight focus group discussions stated their preference to travel by car, unless the destination was more easily accessed by bus, for example, travelling into the city centre. They preferred to use their card if going into a city centre, to avoid traffic and parking fees.

“I don’t use the car in town; it’s much easier and faster on the bus.”

(Female, older person’s group)

Summary

5.19 The main reason for travelling using their card was identified as being for shopping or leisure purposes. This was the case for all cardholders, although the research did reveal that those who held Disabled or Visual Impairment cards were more likely to use their cards to travel for medical appointments or work purposes. This is potentially likely to be the case as the age profile of these cardholders was significantly younger than for the 60+ population.

5.20 Analysis of how the card was used showed significant differences in relation to where the respondent lived. For example, those living in more rural areas, in particular in the HITRANS area, were significantly more likely to use their card to travel longer distances and likely to use their card and less likely to use their card as frequently as in other areas. This was in comparison to those living in the SPT area who were most likely to travel shorter distances and use their card more frequently.

6. BENEFITS OF THE SCHEME

Introduction

6.1 The telephone survey and focus groups sought to understand the benefits of the scheme to card holders in addition to the impact of the scheme in relation to change in mode of transport. The focus groups also sought to identify recommendations for improvement to the scheme.

Important aspects of the scheme

6.2 Respondents were asked what they believed were the most important aspects of having a concessionary travel card. This revealed that more than 8 in 10 respondents (81%) said it was important that it saves them money or is free (81%), 51% said it gives them independence and freedom and 42% said it enables them to get out of the house.

6.3 When asked to select the aspect which was most important to them, 39% of respondents selected the financial aspects of the card and that it saves them money. This was followed by giving them independence or freedom (20%).

Table 6.1: Most important aspects of having the NEC

Q34 (a) What aspects of having a Concessionary Travel Card are important to you? And (b) which would you say is most important?		
	All	Most important
Base: All respondents, n=3127	%	%
Saving money/ free	81%	39%
Gives me independence/ freedom	52%	20%
Gets me out of the house	42%	14%
Allows me to get to places that I can't park my car i.e. hospital	27%	14%
I can travel with confidence/ safely	19%	2%
It allows me to socialise more	18%	2%
Convenient/ easy to use	3%	2%
Being able to use it at swimming/ leisure facilities	3%	0.3%
Do not need to carry money/ look for change	2%	1%
It gives me the confidence that I can travel in other ways/ allows me to avoid driving	1%	1%
Can visit the hospital with greater ease	1%	1%
Other	2%	1%
Don't use	5%	5%
Don't know/ no response	1%	1%
None	1%	1%

- 6.4 Analysis by card type revealed significant differences in relation to the most important benefits to card holders. Saving money was significantly more likely to be cited as the most important benefit by 60+ card holders (40%) than Disabled or Visual card holder (23%). On the other hand, having independence and freedom was cited as the most important aspect of the card for Disabled or Visual card holders (33%) than 60+ card holders (16%).
- 6.5 Generally the same benefits were mentioned across all the focus groups. Participants found it difficult to rank these in order of importance, stating that they were all interlinked. These included benefits such as financial savings from the card, the convenience of being able to leave the car at home, the independence the card offered, it also helps to reduce social isolation and get people out of the house. Below we look in more detail at the individual benefits as mentioned by participants.

Financial savings

- 6.6 Financial savings were mentioned by all eight groups as being a key benefit of the scheme. A number of participants said that they made considerable savings through the NEC scheme.

“You can get on the bus for free and you don’t have to pay £29 a week.”

(Male, young disabled group)

“It’s quite expensive without the card; it can be £3.60 for a return journey. Add that onto the shopping bill every week and that’s an expense.”

(Female, older person’s group)

- 6.7 Participants in both older and disabled group discussions said that they were motivated to travel because the bus was free to use. This was thought to be particularly good for older people in general, who then did not need to worry about the cost of travelling.

“It has made the world of difference for elderly and disabled people. You don’t need to think about price....you don’t have to think ‘can I afford to take the bus today?’”

(Female, physical disabilities group)

- 6.8 However, in three focus group discussions (two with older people and one with people with physical disabilities) one participant in each, suggested that they felt “embarrassed” to be using the card, because they felt as though they were “getting something for nothing”. The rest of the group did not agree, although in the discussions with older people some were willing to pay “a nominal fee” towards the cost of the scheme in order to ensure its continuation.

“Does anyone else feel a bit iffy or embarrassed using their card?...I feel as though I’m getting something for nothing and I’m not sure I’m deserving.”

(Male, older person’s group)

Reduces isolation

- 6.9 In each of the eight groups, participants felt strongly that the NEC motivated people to 'get out and about' and to keep active. The card was also perceived to reduce social isolation, as older people particularly were able to use the card to meet friends and visit relatives. It was suggested that if people were having to pay to do so, they "might not bother".

"One problem we have in this country is loneliness. We have an ageing population and there are more single people living alone. They need to get up and get out and they need the bus for that."

(Female, older person's group)

Independence

- 6.10 Disabled participants in particular commented on how the NEC gives them a sense of independence and allows them to travel without having to rely on others. Although this issue was discussed in all eight groups with the vast majority agreeing the card contributed to a sense of independence.

"A sense of independence, so you can live your life. I get to see friends without having to get mum and dad to pick me up: I can get there myself."

(Female, young disabled group)

"It gives me more independence; I've got the (guide) dog so I can come and go as I like."

(Female, blind and visually impaired group)

Confidence

- 6.11 Linked to the idea of independence, was that of confidence. Specifically young, disabled participants indicated that the card has helped to give them confidence to get out and be more independent.

"It allows me to travel on my own on the bus; it used to be daunting, but now with the card, I was able to do a few practice runs and now I have confidence to do it on my own."

(Male, young disabled group)

"The pass should be a tool to build confidence and independence."

(Male, young Asian deaf group)

Convenience

- 6.12 Drivers in particular commented on the convenience of the bus, as they benefited from not having to take their cars into towns and cities to park. One participant was motivated to use the bus for convenience, so as not to lose her resident's parking space.

"I live in the city centre and so I don't use my car very much. I have a resident's parking space and if I take the car out during the day, I am likely to lose my parking space – so I use the bus more."

(Female, older person's group)

Health and wellbeing improvements

- 6.13 Focus group participants all agreed that having the card had made a difference to their lives. This included suggestions that the card had improved their health and wellbeing as well as an overall improvement to their quality of life, for example, by being able to 'get out and about'. Some suggested that without the card, they would not be as active and would not be motivated to go out as much.

"You are interacting with people on the bus, so you are part of society and mingling with other people."

(Male, older person's group)

"I would probably put on more weight without it."

(Female, blind and visually impaired group)

- 6.14 Participants suggested that as people become more active and motivated to travel as a result of the NEC scheme, there would be a subsequent reduction in the demand for health services. Older participants suggested that as a result of using the card, people were keeping active and were out of the house. This could help to ward against isolation and the "onset of dementia". It was suggested that this would help contribute to savings for the NHS.

"The amount spent on concessionary travel must save the NHS millions through social interaction."

(Female, older person's group)

"Where would we be without it? We would be lonely, depressed and in the GPs for something to cheer us up."

(Female, physical disabilities group)

- 6.15 The participants all agreed that their overall quality of life had improved as a result of the NEC. This tended to be because the card gave them motivation to get out and undertake activities for little, or no cost. And for others it gave them a new found sense of independence; giving them a new confidence to travel alone.

"Pensioners are out because of the card."

(Female, physical disabilities group)

“It lets you remember there is life outside (your house)”

(Male, physical disabilities group)

“It has made me more independent. I go to Glasgow now and I had never done that before I got the pass.”

(Male, young disabled group)

Difference of the card in the future

- 6.16 Focus group participants were asked to consider what difference they thought the card would make to them in the future. Groups of both older and disabled participants agreed that the card would become more important to them, particularly as they aged and perceived they would rely on the card to keep them active.

“Later in life when I can’t rely on my parents it will be useful.”

(Male, young disabled group)

“I drive to Aberdeen, but the time will come when I can’t do that anymore and the card will be invaluable.”

(Male, older person’s group)

- 6.17 For some of the young disabled participants, driving was not an option because of the extent of their disabilities. For them, the card would become a vital means of getting about.

“I have no chance of driving, between my visual impairment and my reactions so I will have to rely on my card.”

(Male, young disabled group)

Circumstances without the card

- 6.18 Focus group participants were asked to consider what their circumstances would be without a National Entitlement Card. All of the groups came up with similar circumstances without the card, including being financially worse off, and having poorer health. Each focus group agreed that without the NEC, they would be financially worse off as they would have to pay for bus travel. Some suggested that they would need to limit their activities to suit their budget.

“It would cost a lot more...you would have to limit yourself to going out one day a week.”

(Female, physical disabilities group)

“Financially, I would be poorer.”

(Male, blind and visually impaired group)

- 6.19 The young disabled participants spoke of the NEC as being their 'security' as it meant they did not need to worry or get anxious about handling money.

"I would have no sense of security – having the card is like a comfort blanket; you don't need to worry about having change, it makes me feel safe."
(Female, young disabled group)

"It would make me ill because I panic about money."
(Male, young disabled group)

- 6.20 Eight participants across five discussion groups suggested that without the card, their health would suffer as a result of not being out and keeping active as much as they would have done, if they could still travel for free.

"My health would be worse; it would be costing me more and I wouldn't be able to do half the things I do now."
(Female, older person's group)

"There would be more chance of getting depression, so it would affect your health."
(Female, blind and visually impaired group)

- 6.21 All eight groups indicated that they would either 'lose their confidence' and/or their independence if they were not able to travel on the bus. For some this would mean losing contact with friends, or having to rely on others.

"Friendships would be lost, social circles would be lost – especially those further away."
(Male, young Asian deaf group)

"I would lose contact with my friends – I would be anti-social."
(Female, young disabled group)

"You would have to rely on others – your independence would go."
(Male, blind and visually impaired group)

"I wouldn't go out as much, and I would have to depend on my parents a lot and not feel as independent."
(Male, young disabled group)

- 6.22 Two participants suggested that they would not be able to continue activities such as volunteering, as the cost of travelling regularly would be too much to maintain. Eight other participants however said that they would be determined to continue these activities, but would have to pay to do so.

"If I had to pay to get to my volunteering job, and the business wasn't able to reimburse me, then I wouldn't be able to go."
(Male, older person's group)

- 6.23 Without the card, 15 participants said that they would be forced to change their mode of transport. For example, drivers said that they might use their car more often, while others said they would have to walk.

“If not able to access the bus, then I would have to rely on lifts from others or walk.”

(Female, young Asian deaf group)

“I would have to use the car more but it’s expensive.”

(Female, learning disabilities group)

Changes to travel method

- 6.24 Finally, telephone survey respondents were asked about any changes to travel methods as a result of having the concessionary travel card. Just over 4 in 10 respondents (43%) said that yes, the travel card had indeed changed their travel method. Analysis by age revealed that respondents aged 60-64 were most likely to have stated that their main method of travel has changed as a result of having their NEC.

- 6.25 Those who agreed with this statement were asked in what way their travel methods had changed. The vast majority of these individuals said they now use the car less frequently (88%). One in ten (10%) stated that they now use the bus instead of the train and 8% stated that they now walk more than they used to.

- 6.26 Within the focus groups, some participants commented that since they had received their NEC, they had changed their mode of transport, to travel more often on the bus, and less often in their cars. Three participants had given up their cars completely since using their cards and relied solely on public transport.

“I’ve given up my car, because now, living in the city centre, I found that with the bus pass, I was using the car less and less.”

(Female, older person’s group)

- 6.27 Focus groups participants also commented that as a result of the free bus travel with the card, they were now travelling more often and more widely than they did before they had the NEC. This had made a difference to many of the participants as they said they were now able to explore parts of Scotland that they had never been to before. This helped to keep them active and give an increased sense of independence.

“See if you just want to go to Edinburgh, you can just go – you don’t have to pay.”

(Female, learning disabilities group)

“The deaf community are very diverse and dispersed. Having the card means that they can travel to meet one another.”

(Male, young Asian deaf group)

“I’m hoping to use it to explore Scotland – something I have never done before...(why not?)...a cost issue. I’m now able to explore Glasgow for the first time in my adult life.”

(Male, older person’s group)

Improvements to the NEC scheme

- 6.28 Focus group participants were asked if they could suggest any improvements to the National Entitlement Card scheme. Related to the points raised about satisfaction with the scheme overall was the suggestion that more needs to be done to increase bus drivers’ awareness of disability issues. The deaf participants suggested that an introduction to basic sign language be introduced to the theory test for bus drivers.

“My dream is that all bus drivers learn sign language to reduce the hassle.”

(Male, young Asian deaf group)

- 6.29 For physically disabled participants, they would like to see the scheme improved through more training for drivers on the use of ramps and lifts so passengers could more easily access the bus.

- 6.30 The deaf community felt the scheme would be improved with more accessible information. These participants requested information about the NEC to be made available in British Sign Language –perhaps on a DVD format. This included information such as applying for a card and where you can use it. This view was shared by the blind and visually impaired participants who also requested more accessible information – especially in relation to bus timetables.

“There should be information disseminated in a manner that we understand, like on a DVD.”

(Female, young Asian deaf group)

“When we first got the card, we were really excited, but there is a lot of information about its use that is not disseminated to the deaf community. It is written in English, so we don’t read it.”

(Female, young Asian deaf group)

- 6.31 Also mentioned as a possible improvement was to extend the scheme to cover train travel. Already some participants enjoyed a discounted fare on the trains, but it was indicated these participants would have preferred for this to be free travel under the scheme (although participants were clear that any extension of the scheme should not be to the detriment of the bus element). Others mentioned their desire to be able to use the card in England, so that they could travel further to see friends and family, for free.

“It would be better if the bus card let you travel free to England, so I could go on bus holidays to London or Blackpool.”

(Female, learning disabilities group)

- 6.32 Several of the participants had a companion travel card which entitled them to travel with a companion for support. One participant needed to travel with two support workers, but her card only allowed one to travel for free. She had to pay for the second and suggested that the scheme should make allowances for people who needed a second support person.

“I would like a plus, plus card so that I don’t have to pay for my second companion. One trip from Motherwell to East Kilbride cost £12 one way.”

(Female, learning disabilities group)

- 6.33 Other practical suggestions were made about the design of the card. One suggestion was to have a smaller card which could be attached to the cardholder’s key-ring. It was thought this would limit the number of times this individual lost their card. The participants of the blind and visually impaired group suggested that the card should have one of the corners cut off. This would help them to distinguish the NEC from other cards in their possession, but also help to identify which way up it should be on the reader.

“The old concessionary travel cards used to have the edge cut off so that the blind person could tell which card it was.”

(Male, blind and visually impaired group)

- 6.34 Finally, there was a suggestion that there should be a ‘swipe on, swipe off’ system on the buses. This was raised in two groups. The first was during an older person’s group in relation to cutting down on bus companies ‘fraudulently’ claiming longer journeys. By swiping on and off, there could be no discrepancy over the journey taken. The second group to mention this improvement was participants in the blind and visually impaired group. They felt a swipe system would be easier for disabled people to use.

“This would define the journey and make it more difficult for drivers to say the passenger travelled for longer.”

(Male, older person’s group)

“I’m surprised there is just no swipe machine; that would be easier. The difficulty is that the card has to be a particular way up and I can’t tell if the card is upside down or not.”

(Male, blind and visually impaired group)

Summary

- 6.35 Both survey respondents and focus group participants were readily able to identify many benefits of having their NEC, with the most commonly identified benefits as being saving money, providing independence and getting them out of the house.

- 6.36 For respondents with a Disabled or Visual Impairment badge, the provision of independence was much more likely to be a key benefit. This was strongly reinforced at the focus groups where, in particular, younger participants felt that having the Card gave them the opportunity to get out and about without relying on their parents or carers for support. This was very important to them.
- 6.37 Whilst for older people saving money was very important, this led to further benefits in that due to the fact that they did not have to worry about money they were more likely to make journeys and get out of the house than they would otherwise have been. This led to a positive impact on both their mental and physical wellbeing. In particular it significantly reduced social isolation and led to older people getting out and interacting with others when they would not have done in the absence of the card.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Key Findings

Application and Administration of the Scheme

- 7.1 The majority of respondents who could recall the process of applying for a card were very positive in relation to the ease of application. This was also the case for renewal. However, focus group participants as well as disabled or visual card holders did highlight some issues about the ease of renewal; particularly the requirement to provide proof of disablement which was problematic for some.
- 7.2 There were relatively few respondents who had visited the Transport Scotland website. Of those that had, the majority found the website helpful.

Use of the Card

- 7.3 The NEC is widely used by respondents, with 83% stating that they use their card for bus travel. This was the case for Visual and Disabled card holders in addition to 60+ card holders. The main reasons for lack of usage were that their health or disability prevented bus travel or that the card holder had a preference to drive. Additionally, a significant proportion (37%) of respondents also used their NEC for other purposes such as train travel, leisure purposes or identification.
- 7.4 The main reasons for travelling using the card tended to be shopping and leisure, although a higher proportion of disabled and visual impairment card holders used their NEC to travel to medical appointments.
- 7.5 The frequency of use and distance travelled varied depending upon the reason for usage and the geographical area in which the respondent lived. Those living in the HITRANS area, for example, were less likely to use their card a number of times per week and more likely to travel longer distances. Whereas those living in the SPT area were more likely to use their card a number of times per week and tended to travel shorter distances.
- 7.6 Satisfaction with bus travel when using the card was very high and very few respondents had experienced problems when using their card to travel on the bus. Where users had experienced a problem putting their card on the machine, this tended to be due to disability issues. Whilst generally drivers were perceived to be helpful in these instances, a number of the focus group respondents did identify circumstances where they had found drivers to be unhelpful and believed that they would benefit from disability awareness training.

- 7.7 When asked about misuse, very few respondents or focus group participants could identify instances of misuse. Awareness of Transport Scotland's helpline to report misuse was low with only one in four respondents aware of this.

Satisfaction with and benefits of the scheme

- 7.8 The research has found that NEC holders were extremely satisfied with the scheme overall. Not only were they extremely satisfied with the scheme, but the scheme was very important to them and they were keen to see that the scheme continued.
- 7.9 Survey respondents were what they believed were the most important aspects of the Concessionary Travel Card scheme. The most important aspects were identified as being the financial savings provided by the scheme, giving the individual independence or freedom and allowing the respondent to get out of the house.
- 7.10 The identified benefits were reinforced at the focus groups where financial savings were mentioned by every group as being a key benefit of the scheme. Some participants said that they had made considerable savings by travelling with the NEC. Others were motivated to travel because the bus was free to use. This was thought to be particularly good for older people who then did not need to worry about the cost of travelling.
- 7.11 The ability to get people 'out and about' was also a key benefit, and one which yielded additional benefits for respondents in relation to reducing social isolation and keeping older people active. These were both identified as having significant impacts on health and wellbeing. Young disabled people mentioned having increased confidence and independence as a key benefit of the scheme.
- 7.12 The NEC was also considered important for the future. Both older and disabled participants agreed that the card would become more important to them as they aged and they believed they would come to rely on it more to keep them active. For some disabled participants, driving a car was not an option for them because of the extent of their disabilities. These participants said that travelling by bus using their card would be their means of travelling independently.
- 7.13 Without a card, people described their circumstance as being poorer financially, with worse health and less confidence to be out and about.

APPENDICES

Appendix One – Telephone survey questionnaire

Appendix Two – Focus group discussion guide

APPENDIX 1: TELEPHONE QUESTIONNAIRE



Project number	P527
Project name	Concessionary Travel Customer Survey

INTERVIEWER INTRODUCTION:

Good morning/ afternoon, my name is ****. I am calling from an independent research organisation called Research Resource. We have been commissioned by the Scottish Government through its agency Transport Scotland to carry out some research with Concessionary Travel Card holders in order to help them understand the use of and satisfaction with the Scotland-wide free bus travel scheme for Older and Disabled People. Please can I speak to *****?

The survey should take approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Is this a convenient time to complete the survey?

ADD IF NECESSARY

- The research is being conducted under the Code of Practice of the Market Research Society, which means that all of the answers you give are strictly confidential and anonymous. Participation in this survey is voluntary. You can say if there are any questions you do not wish to respond to and we will move on to the next one.
- The responses of all people taking part will be combined into a statistical report.
- You should have received a letter letting you know we are carrying out this research and that you will be contacted.
- If you wish to check that Research Resource is a bona fide research organisation you can contact Lorna Shaw at Research Resource on 0141 641 6410 or Graeme Beale at the Scottish Government.
- If Card holder wishes, the survey can be completed by their carer/ companion.

INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF CONCERNS ARE RAISED THAT THE RESEARCH IS BEING CARRIED OUT BECAUSE THE SCHEME IS UNDER THREAT, PLEASE READ OUT THE FOLLOWING.

The Scottish Government has made clear that it has no plans to change the scheme for cardholders. The purpose of the research is to gather information from the people who use the schemes on their views of free travel and experiences so that the Scottish Government can improve how the scheme is administered, have better understanding of the reasons people travel using their pass and the benefits the scheme may bring to people

READ OUT TO ALL

Firstly I'd like to check that you can participate in the research.

SQ1 Are **you** currently a Concessionary Travel Card holder or have you had one in the last 2 years?

Yes	1	Go to Q1
No	2	Go to SQ2

SQ2 Are you the parent or carer of a current Concessionary Travel Card holder or companion/ carer?

Yes, parent of a Concessionary Travel Card holder	1	Go to Q1
Yes, carer/ companion of a Concessionary Travel Card holder	2	Go to Q1
No	3	THANK AND CLOSE

[INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF RESPONDENT IS A PARENT OR CARER/ COMPANION OF A CONCESSIONARY TRAVEL CARD HOLDER, THEY SHOULD ANSWER ON BEHALF OF THE CONCESSIONARY TRAVEL CARD HOLDER]

The Application Process

1. Can I just confirm which type of card you hold? [INTEVIEWER, VERIFY FROM DATABASE AND CODE ONE ONLY. IF CAN'T REMEMBER, PLEASE CODE CARD TYPE FROM DATABASE]

60+ Concessionary Travel Card	1	Go to Q2
Disabled Concessionary Travel Card	2	
Disabled Plus Companion Concessionary Travel Card	3	
Visually Impaired Concessionary Travel Card	4	
Visually Impaired Plus Companion Concessionary Travel Card	5	

2. How did you first find out about the existence of the Scheme?

On the internet	1	Go to Q3
From my library	2	
From Social Work	3	
From my GP	4	
From the Council at a Council office/ One stop shop	5	
My Council wrote to me directly	6	
At the Post Office	7	
From the Bus Station	8	
Word of mouth - Through speaking friends/ family/ colleagues	9	

Media (TV, radio, newspaper)	10	
Advocacy or Support Group (please specify)	11	
Other (please specify)	12	
Don't know/ can't remember	13	

3. How easy did you find it to get the information you needed about the Concessionary Travel Scheme and how to apply?

Very easy	1	Go to Q4
Fairly easy	2	
Neither easy nor difficult	3	
Fairly difficult	4	
Very difficult	5	
Can't remember	6	

4. Where did you find the information you needed about the Concessionary Travel Scheme and application process? [CODE ALL THAT APPLY]

On the internet	1	Go to Q5
From my library	2	
From Social Work	3	
From my GP	4	
From the Council at a Council office/ One stop shop	5	
My Council wrote to me directly	6	
At the Post Office	7	
From the Bus Station	8	
Word of mouth - Through speaking friends/ family/ colleagues	9	
Media (TV, radio, newspaper)	10	
Advocacy or Support Group (please specify)	11	
Other (please specify)	12	
Don't know/ can't remember	13	

5. How knowledgeable were the people you dealt with when getting your Concessionary Travel Card?

Very knowledgeable	1	Go to Q6
Fairly knowledgeable	2	
Not very knowledgeable	3	
Not at all knowledgeable	4	
Can't remember	5	
Not applicable – I didn't deal with a person	6	

6. How easy did you find the application process when you first wanted to apply for your card?

Very easy	1	Go to Q7
Fairly easy	2	
Neither easy nor difficult	3	
Fairly difficult	4	
Very difficult	5	
Can't remember	6	

7. Have you ever had to get a replacement card e.g. if your card was lost ,stolen or faulty?

Yes	1	Go to Q8
No	2	Go to Q9

8. How easy did you find the process for getting a replacement card?

Very easy	1	Go to Q9
Fairly easy	2	
Neither easy nor difficult	3	
Fairly difficult	4	Go to Q8b
Very difficult	5	
Can't remember	6	Go to Q9

8b. Can you explain what made the process difficult?

--

9. Have you had to renew your card due to it expiring? [NB THIS IS ONLY RELEVANT FOR DISABLED CARD HOLDERS, CODES 2 TO 5 AT Q1 – IF CODE 1 AT Q1 PLEASE CODE NOT APPLICABLE AND GO TO Q11]

Yes	1	Go to Q10
No	2	Go to Q11
Not applicable – 60+ card holder	3	

10. How easy did you find the process for renewing your card?

Very easy	1	Go to Q11
Fairly easy	2	
Neither easy nor difficult	3	
Fairly difficult	4	Go to Q10b
Very difficult	5	
Can't remember	6	Go to Q11

10b. Can you explain what made the process difficult?

--

11. Have you visited the Transport Scotland Website for information on the Scheme?

Yes	1	Go to Q12
No	2	Go to Q14

12. How helpful did you find the information on the website?

Very helpful	1	Go to Q14
Fairly helpful	2	
Fairly unhelpful	3	Go to Q13
Very unhelpful	4	
Can't remember	5	Go to Q14

13. You said the information was unhelpful, what information would you have like to have found on the website? [INTERVIEWER: PROBE FULLY]

	Go to Q14
--	------------------

Using the Card

14. Do you use your Card to travel on the bus?

Yes	1	Go to Q16
No	2	Go to Q15

15. If not, why not?

--

Now go to Q34

16. Have you ever experienced any of the following problems when travelling by bus? [INTERVIEWER: PLEASE READ OUT LIST AND CODE ALL THAT APPLY]

Problem physically putting your card on the machine	1	Go to Q17
Machine on the bus broken	2	Go to Q20
Card not working	3	Go to Q18
Any other problems (please specify)		Go to Q20

17. Can you explain what the problem was? [IN TERVIEWER: PROBE FOR WHETHER THE PROBLEM WAS THE PHYSICAL LOCATION/ PLACEMENT OF THE MACHINE OR THAT THE NATURE OF THE PERSONS DISABILITY/ MOBILITY MEANS THEY CANNOT PLACE THE CARD ON IT]

		Go to Q20 [IF ALSO EXPERIENCED CARD NOT WORKING GO TO Q18]
--	--	---

18. Did you hand over your card and get issued with a 7 day pass to allow you to travel before you receive your new card?

Yes	1	Go to Q18
No	2	Go to Q20

19. If yes, was the process explained to you clearly by the Driver?

Yes	1	Go to Q20
No	2	

20. Do you show your photo to the driver?

Yes	1	Go to Q22
No	2	Go to Q21

21. Does the driver ask to see your photo?

Yes	1	Go to Q22
No	2	

22. Does the driver check where you are going?

They don't have to, I always tell them	1	Go to Q23
They don't have to, they know me/ where I go	2	
Always	3	
Most of the time	4	
Only occasionally	5	
Never	6	
Can't remember	7	

23. Have you ever seen or experienced abuse or misuse of the bus pass?

Yes (can you describe what you have seen or experienced)	1	Go to Q24
No	2	

24. Are you aware that you can report abuse of the scheme to Transport Scotland's hotline?

Yes	1	Go to Q25
No	2	

25. Do you use the Card for anything other than free bus travel? [INTERVIEWER NOTE: If respondent asks 'what other things can I use it for?' you can say that: *In some Council areas the national entitlement card – the concessionary bus pass – can be used to access other council services such as local concessionary train travel or access to leisure or library services. Your council will be able to give you more information on that.*]

Yes	1	Go to Q26
No	2	Go to Q27

26. What else do you use your card for? [INTERVIEWER: Code all that apply]

Train travel	1	Go to Q27
Leisure services	2	
Swimming	3	
Library	4	
Ferry	5	
Other (please specify)	6	

27. If you have a companion card (Code 3 or 5 at Q1), how often do you have someone travelling with you as your companion? [INTERVIEWER NOTE: this is denoted by C+1 at the bottom right of the card and allows the card holder to have someone accompany them on the bus. The companion also travels for free]

Every time I travel	1	Go to Q28
Most of the time I travel	2	
Some of the time I travel	3	
Rarely when I travel	4	
Never	5	
Not applicable – don't have companion card	6	

28. How satisfied are you overall in relation to your experience of travelling on the bus generally?

Very satisfied	1	Go to Q29
Fairly satisfied	2	
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3	
Fairly dissatisfied	4	Go to Q28b
Very dissatisfied	5	
Can't remember	6	Go to Q29

28b. Why do you say you are dissatisfied with your overall experience of travelling on the bus generally? [INTERVIEWER: PROBE FULLY]

	Go to Q29
--	------------------

29. How satisfied are you overall with the Concessionary Travel Card scheme?

Very satisfied	1	Go to Q30
Fairly satisfied	2	
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3	
Fairly dissatisfied	4	Go to Q29b
Very dissatisfied	5	
Can't remember	6	Go to Q30

29b. Why do you say you are dissatisfied with the Concessionary Travel Card scheme? [INTERVIEWER: PROBE FULLY]

	Go to Q30
--	------------------

How and why the Card is used

30.A) What type of travelling are you doing when using your card? CODE ALL THAT APPLY – READ OUT LIST

B) And what type of travelling do you do most often when using your card?
CODE ONE ONLY

	A)ALL	B)MOST OFTEN	
Access support services eg day care centres	1	1	Go to Q31
Work	2	2	
Leisure	3	3	
Shopping	4	4	
Medical appointments	5	5	
Visiting friends and family	6	6	
Day trip/ holiday	7	7	
Education	8	8	
Just to get out	9	9	
Other (please specify)	10	10	

31. Thinking of the main type of travelling that you do using your Card, is there a particular time of day or times of day when you normally travel for [TYPE OF TRAVEL USED MOST OFTEN AT Q30B]? MULTI – READ OUT

Early morning (7am-9am)	1	Go to Q32
Late morning (9am -12noon)	2	
Early afternoon (12noon – 3pm)	3	
Late afternoon (3pm – 5pm)	4	
Early evening (5pm – 7pm)	5	
Evenings after 7pm	6	
No main time of travel/ varies	7	

32. What sort of distance do you normally travel when using your card for for [TYPE OF TRAVEL USED MOST OFTEN AT Q30B]? SINGLE – READ OUT

Under 1 mile	1	Go to Q33
1 to under 2 miles	2	
2 to under 5 miles	3	
5 to under 10 miles	4	
10 to under 25 miles	5	
25 to under 50 miles	6	
50 miles and over	7	
No normal distance of travel/ varies	8	
Don't know/ can't remember	9	

33. On average how many bus journeys per week do you use the Card in a week when travelling for [TYPE OF TRAVEL USED MOST OFTEN AT Q30B]? By that I mean the number of times you travel on a bus so if you use it to go to the shops you will go on once to get there and once to get back. This is 2 journeys.
SINGLE – READ OUT

Less than once per week	1	Go to Q34
Once per week	2	
2-3 times per week	3	
4-7 times per week	4	
More than 7 times per week	5	

Benefits of the Scheme

34. What aspects of having a Concessionary Travel Card are important to you? [DO NOT PROMPT. PROBE FULLY AND CODE ALL THAT APPLY]
[IF RESPONDENT STATES MORE THAN ONE IMPORTANT ASPECT OF HAVING THE CARD] You said a number of things were important to you in having the card, which would you say is the most important?

	All	Most Important	
Saving money/ free	1	1	Go to Q35
Gets me out of the house	2	2	
Gives me independence/ freedom	3	3	
Allows me to get to places that I can't park my car i.e. hospital	4	4	
Being able to use it at swimming/ leisure facilities	5	5	
It allows me to socialise more	6	6	
I can travel with confidence/ safely	7	7	
Other (specify)	8	8	

35. Has having your Concessionary Travel Card changed *method* you use to travel?
By method we mean car, bus, train, bike, walking etc..

Yes	1	Go to Q36
No	2	Go to Q37

36. If yes, in what way have you changed the method you use to travel?

I use the car less frequently	1	Go to Q37
I now walk less than I used to	2	
I now walk more than I used to	4	
I now use the bus instead of the train	5	
Other (please specify)	6	

About the Card Holder

[INTERVIEWER: READ OUT] This final section of the survey asks some factual questions about the Card holder. These will be used only for analysis purposes to understand the characteristics of Concessionary Travel Card holders. I would like to remind you that these questions will be completely anonymous and if you do not want to answer any question, please just say and I will move on to the next one.

37. What is your employment status?

Full time employment (more than 35 hrs pw)	1	Go to Q38
Part time employment (16-34 hrs pw)	2	
Part time employment (under 16 hrs pw)	3	
Unemployed/Seeking Work	4	
Unemployed/Not seeking work	5	
Not working due to health condition	6	
Looking after home/ family	7	
Carer	8	
Retired	9	
In further/ higher education	10	
School	11	
Pre School	12	
Other (please write in below)	13	

38. What is your total annual household income? I am going to read out a list of income bands. Please say 'yes' when you hear the option which best describes your household income. [READ OUT]

£5,000 or under	1	Go to Q39
£5,001-£10,000	2	
£10,001-£20,000	3	
£20,001-£30,000	4	
£30,001-£40,000	5	
£40,001-£50,000	6	
£50,001-£60,000	7	
Over £60,000	8	
Prefer not to say	9	
Don't know/ unsure	10	

39. How would you describe your ethnic group? [READ OUT]

White Scottish	1	Go to Q40
White other British [PROBE: NOT SCOTTISH?]	2	
White Irish	3	
Gypsy/ traveller	4	
Polish	5	
Any other white background	6	
Mixed or multiple ethnic background	7	
Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British	8	
Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British	9	
Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British	10	
Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British	11	
Any other Asian background	12	
Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or British	13	
African, African Scottish or British	14	
Any other black background	15	
Arab, Arab Scottish or Arab British	16	
Any other group (please write in below)	17	

40. What is the first or main language spoken in your household?

English	1	Go to Q41 If Card holder is under 16, go to Q43
Other (please specify)	2	

41. What religion, religious denomination or body to you belong to? [READ OUT]

None	1	Go to Q42
Church of Scotland	2	
Roman Catholic	3	
Other Christian	4	
Muslim	5	
Buddhist	6	
Sikh	7	
Jewish	8	
Hindu	9	
Pagan	10	
Another religion (please specify)	11	
Prefer not to say	12	

42. I will now read out a list of terms people sometimes use to describe how they think of themselves. As I read the list please say 'yes' when you hear the option that best describes how you think of yourself. [INTERVIEWER READ OUT THE LIST TO END WITHOUT PAUSING. NOTE THAT 'HETEROSEXUAL OR STRAIGHT' IS ONE OPTION; 'GAY OR LESBIAN' IS ONE OPTION]

Heterosexual/ Straight	1	Go to Q44
Gay/ Lesbian	2	
Bisexual	3	
Other	4	
Prefer not to say	5	

43. As part of this research, we will be speaking with Concessionary Travel Card holders directly to gather more in-depth feedback about their experiences of the Scheme. We will be organising a series of focus group discussions. Would you be interested in taking part in a focus group discussion?

Yes	1	COMPLETE DETAILS BELOW
No	2	THANK AND CLOSE

(A focus group brings together between 6 and 8 people in a local venue for around an hour and a half to discuss similar topics to those we have covered today).

If yes, interviewer to collect contact details, (ensure confidentiality, details will be destroyed on completion of this research)

Name

Daytime contact telephone number

Email

Local Authority area

A researcher will be in touch in the next few weeks with further information about being a focus group participant.

[INTERVIEWER: CLOSE INTERVIEW BY READING OUT STATEMENT] “Thank you very much for your help. Can I assure you once again that the information you have given will be treated as absolutely confidential and will only be used for the purposes of genuine research.”

APPENDIX 2: FOCUS GROUP TOPIC GUIDE

Concessionary Travel Focus Group Discussion Guide

90 minutes

Introductions (5 minutes)

Facilitator introduces research and reminds participants about confidentiality and anonymity. Ask all participants to introduce themselves and give brief intro to their Concessionary Travel Card history.

- Name
- Local to the area?
- How long had a Concessionary Travel Card?
- What type of card they hold

1. Current use of Concessionary Travel Card (20 minutes)

Facilitator to find out the types of usage of the Concessionary Travel Card and the circumstances in which a Concessionary Travel Card is used.

- When using your card is it mostly for Social/Pleasure/Business?
- When are you travelling? Daytime? weekends? evenings?
- Where do you use your card? (bus, ferry, etc)
- How frequently are you using the card? (daily, weekly, less often?)
- What sort of distances are you travelling when you use the card? Is it travelling in your local area, or do you use it to travel further away?
- Describe the process of getting on the bus – do you put your card on the ticket machine? (probe if yes/no)
- Does the driver always ask to see your photo/ask for a destination (why/why not?)
- Do you use your card for anything other than free bus travel? (probe: leisure, library, ferry, train?) – probe awareness of using card for other activities?

2. Administration and management (15 minutes)

- How did you find out about the Concessionary Travel Card scheme?
- How easy was it to apply for a card in the first instance? (replacement cards?) Any issues when completing the form?
- Where did you go for your card? How knowledgeable were the staff?
- Any card renewals? (probe on the process)
- Has anyone visited the Transport Scotland website (probe for comments – helpful?)

3. Misuse (5-10minutes)

- Have you come across examples of anyone abusing the concessionary travel scheme - this can be cardholders, bus operators or anyone else?
- In what circumstances were people misusing the scheme? What should the punishments be?
- **(If no examples** – do you think the card scheme is open to misuse? Why/why not?)
- Are you aware you can report misuse to Transport Scotland through their hotline? (probe if anyone used this hotline? Aware of it? Would you use it?)

4. Value of the Concessionary Travel Card (25minutes)

- What are the benefits of using the card? What are the most important aspects for you? (
- What difference has the card made to you? (health, quality of life, financial savings, etc)
- What difference will the card make to you in the future (probe: encourage socialising, get out the house, reduce demand for health care, increased use of leisure and culture facilities?)
- Without this scheme, what would your circumstances be? (would you still be able to get out of the house/work, etc. Probe fully)
- Without the card do you think you would.....? (probe: make more use of other public transport, of taxis, take the car more, rely on friends and family, go out less often).

(Activity) – Ask participants to establish the important elements of the concessionary travel card scheme and to rank them in order as a group, using flash cards (if appropriate) For example: What are the important elements of the scheme? Which is the most important to you? Rank in order of importance...e.g., allows independence, saving money.....

5. Satisfaction with the Scheme (15 minutes)

- How satisfied are you overall with the Concessionary Travel Card scheme? (ask open and probe fully...why do you say that?)
- **(Activity) – ask participants to rate on a scale of one to five, where one is poor and five is excellent, their satisfaction with the following aspects of the scheme:**
 - Applying for a card
 - Information on Transport Scotland's website
 - Your experience of using the card for bus travel generally
 - Your experience of using the card for train or ferry travel generally
 - Your experience of using the card for other leisure and culture services
 - (Other – based on findings from discussion)
- Do you have any suggestions for ways the scheme could be improved in the future?

6 Thank and Close (5 minutes)

- Any other final comments from participants.

Facilitator to thank participants and remind them their comments will remain anonymous. Remind participants this information will be aggregated with other focus group participant comments to inform a report for Transport Scotland.

Further copies of this document are available, on request, in audio and large print formats and in community languages (Urdu; Bengali; Gaelic; Hindi; Punjabi; Cantonese; Arabic; Polish).

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Any enquiries regarding this document/publication should be sent to us at:

Transport Scotland
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh EH6 6QQ

0141 272 7100
info@transportscotland.gsi.gov.uk
www.transportscotland.gov.uk

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