



**CONCESSIONARY TRAVEL -
CUSTOMER FEEDBACK RESEARCH
YEAR TWO REPORT**



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**CLIENT: TRANSPORT SCOTLAND
RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY: RESEARCH RESOURCE AND ODS
CONSULTING**

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

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

- 1.1 Research Resource and ODS Consulting were commissioned by Transport Scotland to undertake customer research into the views of National Entitlement Card (NEC) holders, who are users of the Scotland-wide Free Bus Travel for Older and Disabled People Scheme. This report summarises the key findings from year 2 of a two year programme of research with card holders in order to provide insight into the use and value of the NEC.
- 1.2 The year 2 research comprised a large scale telephone survey of 3,088 card holders and qualitative research with users of the scheme across Scotland through a combination of focus group discussions and in-depth telephone interviews.
- 1.3 The telephone survey was undertaken with 3,088 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.
- 1.4 The aim of the qualitative research was to complement the telephone survey and explore the views of card holders in more depth. A total of 67 people participated in this study (62 participants at seven focus groups and five telephone interviews). The groups and discussion topics covered use of a range of card types including 60+, disabled and visually impaired entitlement cards. This research was carried out across a mix of locations (including urban locations such as Edinburgh and Dundee to more rural locations such as Moray and South Ayrshire) to give geographical diversity.
- 1.5 This executive summary highlights the key findings from this programme of research.

Satisfaction

- 1.6 Satisfaction was extremely high with regards to the Scotland-wide Free Bus Travel for Older and Disabled People Scheme with almost all survey respondents being very or fairly satisfied with the scheme overall. Satisfaction levels have remained similar to 2013 with 98% stating that they were either 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.
- 1.7 Satisfaction with bus travel generally was also high with over 9 in 10 respondents (93%) expressing satisfaction when travelling by bus (92% in 2013). It was interesting to note that despite very high levels of satisfaction, disabled and visually impaired card holders were less likely to state that they

were very satisfied compared to the 60+ card holders. This finding was mirrored in the focus groups where respondents who were disabled or who had a visual impairment were able to identify issues in relation to accessing the bus and in relation to driver attitude towards them.

The application process

- 1.8 Whilst the main channels that raised awareness of the NEC product were informal, mainly through word of mouth, respondents found it easy to obtain the information they needed on the concessionary travel scheme. These findings were consistent with the 2013 customer survey.

Using the card

- 1.9 The research identified that most people (91% of respondents) used their concessionary travel card for free bus travel, a marginal increase from 86% who reported using their card to travel by bus in 2012. This was substantiated in the focus group findings where most people used their card for bus travel and this included local buses as well as intercity buses and national buses. Notably, there was a significantly higher level of usage in urban areas compared to those living in rural areas.
- 1.10 The NEC was also used by 38% (37% in 2012) of respondents for things other than free bus travel. The most commonly cited other use was for train travel followed by identification. Train travel was most common in the Strathclyde transport areas. Those living in the Highlands and Islands and Shetland transport areas also commonly cited that they used their card for ferry travel.
- 1.11 There has been a notable increase of problems experienced when travelling by bus between year 1 and year 2, with an increase of 9% points (rising from 8% experiencing problems in 2013 to 17% in 2014). Issues with the electronic ticketing machine was the most commonly reported problem (10%).
- 1.12 Just 2% of respondents noted that they had problems physically putting the card on the machine. This was similar to last year. Both the survey and focus groups identified that this was more likely to be the case for disabled or visually impaired respondents with a number of examples given in the focus groups of the sort of issues that these respondents faced. It was reported that this experience went one of two ways. Where it was dealt with by a helpful driver, the experience was one that was very positive, but where the attitude of the driver was less helpful, the experience was noted as particularly negative.
- 1.13 A very small proportion of respondents, 2%, stated that they have more than one concessionary bus pass that they use for travel. Almost half of these respondents did not know why they had more than one card. Where they did know, the most common reason was that they had residence in more than one Scottish local authority.

- 1.14 There was very little evidence of misuse of the card with just 15 respondents stating that they have ever given their card to anyone else to use and just 2% (55 respondents) stating that they suspected they had seen misuse of the card. The low level of misuse was also supported by focus group findings.
- 1.15 Almost one third of respondents (29%) were aware that they could report misuse to Transport Scotland's hotline, a marginal increase from 26% in 2013. The focus groups identified very low levels of awareness of the Hotline, although when highlighted to them that it existed focus group participants were very positive about its existence and reassured that Transport Scotland was taking misuse seriously.

Travel patterns using the card

- 1.16 The most common types of journeys cardholders used the card for were, as was the case in 2013, shopping followed by leisure. These findings were supported by the focus groups.
- 1.17 Respondents reported using their card frequently with almost two thirds (65%) saying that they use their card at least once per week with almost half (44%) using their card 4 or more times per week.
- 1.18 The distance travelled when using the card varied by area with respondents living in urban areas most likely to travel shorter distances. For instance, almost half of those living in large urban areas using their card to travel distances of under 5 miles, whereas respondents living in remote rural areas usually use their card to travel distances of more than 25 miles. Again, the profile of usage of the card is similar to that reported in 2013.
- 1.19 There was significant evidence of additional journeys being made by card holders that they would not have made had they not had the card. Almost half of respondents (48%) said they now make journeys using their card that they would not previously have done, in particular day trips or visiting friends and relatives.
- 1.20 Thinking of all the journeys they make using the card, almost one third of respondents (32%) stated that they would have made very few or none of these journeys anyway. Respondents also indicated that having the card made a positive impact on both their physical health and wellbeing, with many noting that they now get out and about where they would not have done so.
- 1.21 Over two thirds of respondents (68%) stated that they would have made some, most or all of these journeys anyway. Where that was the case, 34% stated that they would have previously made the journey by car indicating that the NEC is encouraging respondents to make alternative transport choices.

- 1.22 Again, this was supported by subsequent questions asked explicitly about changes to travel methods with over half of respondents stating that having the concessionary travel card has changed the method they use to travel with the vast majority (74%) stating that they now use the bus more and 41% using the car less.

Benefits and impact of the scheme

- 1.23 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 over 4 in 10 respondents said that the main important aspect of the scheme for them was the financial savings. This was followed by giving the individual independence or freedom (22%) and allowing the respondent to get out of the house (10%). These were also the most important aspects identified in 2013.
- 1.24 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.
- 1.25 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.
- 1.26 Just over half of respondents (51%) stated that they felt that having the concessionary travel card helps them maintain, or improve, their physical health. Respondents stated that they did more walking/ walk to the bus stop (46%) or that it simply got them out of the house/ out and about (44%).
- 1.27 In terms of its impact on mental wellbeing, 63% of respondents stated that they felt that having the concessionary travel card helped them maintain, or improve, their sense of mental wellbeing. This was more likely to be the case for those with a disabled or visually impaired card where 77% stated that having the card helped them improve or maintain their sense of mental wellbeing.

2. INTRODUCTION

About This Report

- 2.1 This report sets out the findings from mixed methodology research exploring the views of National Entitlement Card (NEC) holders who are users of the Scotland-Wide Free Bus Travel for Older and Disabled People Scheme. 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.
- 2.2 This report details the key findings from year 2 of a two year programme of research with NEC card holders. The year 2 research comprised a large scale telephone survey of 3,088 card holders and qualitative research with users of the scheme across Scotland through a combination of focus group discussions and in-depth telephone interviews.

Research Context

- 2.3 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).
- 2.4 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.
- 2.5 The take up levels of the 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 Transport Scotland¹ from 2011 identified that approximately 85% of all the concessionary cards were for the over 60s with the remaining 15% for disabled and companion cards. In 2012, 88% of over 60s had a pass (n=1,074,616)². The national scheme replaced a variety of local schemes which had been in operation since the 1960s.
- 2.6 The Scottish Government has been exploring how the scheme can be improved and developed since 2009. A review of the scheme in 2009³ undertook a postal survey and qualitative research with its users. This revealed that the 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.⁴
- 2.7 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

- 2.8 This is the second year of this research, which is to explore the experiences of card holders in using their cards and the value the cards bring to them.
- 2.9 The specific objectives were to provide evidence in relation to:
- the application process;
 - experience of using the card to access the National Concessionary travel scheme and general experience of eligible cardholders who use their entitlement to free travel;
 - transport behaviours and patterns;
 - the perceived benefits and impact of the scheme; and
 - overall satisfaction with the concessionary travel scheme.

¹ www.sns.gov.uk

² <http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/statistics/j285663-05.htm>

³ Evaluation of National Concessionary Travel Scheme, Scottish Government Social Research, Halcrow Group Ltd, 2009

⁴ 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.

- 2.10 The research was carried out over a period of two years in order to gain a detailed and in depth understanding of the use and value of the scheme. Whilst some topics covered within the research were similar between year 1 and year 2, other themes were introduced in order to explore the different issues or themes of interest. In particular, additional questions were added to explore the impact of the NEC on card holders' physical health and mental wellbeing and also a series of questions in order to identify whether having the NEC encourages either additional journeys and/ or a modal shift.
- 2.11 A separate report is available detailing the Year 1 results however where survey results are comparable between the two years, the year on year research results are presented in this report.

3. SURVEY METHODOLOGY

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

Telephone Survey

- 3.2 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. These cardholders 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.
- 3.3 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 (for survey validation) and also contact details for Research Resource (to arrange specific interview times or notify of specific communication needs). The letter was sent on Transport Scotland letterhead, under an appropriate signatory.
- 3.4 Interviewing took place between the 27th of January 2013 and the 14th April 2014 with a total of 3,088 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).
- 3.5 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;
 - Using the card;
 - How and why the card is used; and
 - Benefits of the scheme.
- 3.6 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.

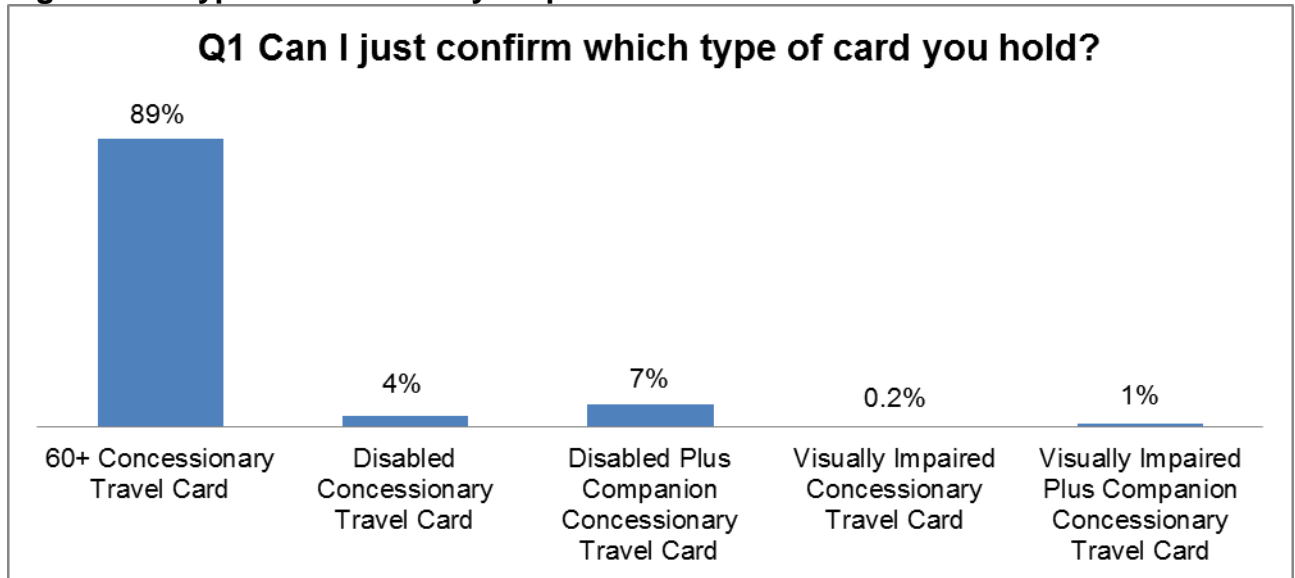
3.7 Table 2.1 shows the profile of telephone respondents, which is proportionally representative of the Card holder population.

Table 3.1: Local authority and cardholder type response profile

Interview profile by card type – Year 2 Survey						
	Total	Elderly	Disabled Companion	Disabled	Visual Companion	Visually Disabled
Aberdeen City	69	66	3	-	-	-
Aberdeenshire	178	168	5	4	1	-
Angus	87	82	3	2	-	-
Argyll & Bute	69	62	3	3	1	-
Clackmannanshire	40	36	2	2	-	-
Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar	18	18	-	-	-	-
Dumfries & Galloway	104	95	4	4	1	-
Dundee City	117	102	10	3	1	1
East Ayrshire	73	63	6	3	1	-
East Dunbartonshire	69	66	3	-	-	-
East Lothian	75	68	4	1	2	-
East Renfrewshire	50	46	3	1	-	-
Edinburgh	273	242	18	10	2	1
Falkirk	128	112	7	8	1	-
Fife	130	106	12	9	2	1
Glasgow City	243	199	25	14	3	2
Highland	145	132	8	4	1	-
Inverclyde	47	40	5	2	-	-
Midlothian	56	50	4	2	-	-
Moray	61	56	3	2	-	-
North Ayrshire	90	79	7	3	1	-
North Lanarkshire	167	139	18	9	1	-
Orkney Islands	19	15	2	2	-	-
Perth & Kinross	107	97	6	3	-	1
Renfrewshire	100	86	9	3	2	-
Scottish Borders	75	71	2	2	-	-
Shetland Islands	18	17	1	-	-	-
South Ayrshire	82	74	5	1	2	-
South Lanarkshire	176	154	13	5	3	1
Stirling	72	64	4	3	1	-
West Dunbartonshire	55	44	7	3	1	-
West Lothian	95	83	8	4	-	-
Total	3088	2732	210	112	27	7

3.8 The chart below summarises the profile of research respondents by card type. In line with card holder characteristics overall, 89% of our sample held a 60+ concessionary travel card, 4% had a disabled concessionary travel card, 7% 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 3.2: Type of card held by respondents



Base: All respondents, n=3088

3.9 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, 80% were aged 65+ and 19% aged between 60 and 64 (1% refused to specify their age). For disabled or visually impaired card holders, the majority were under 60 years of age (57%), 14% aged between 60 and 64 and the remaining 26% aged 65+ (2% refused to specify their age).

Focus groups

3.10 The study involved qualitative research with users of the scheme across Scotland through a combination of focus group discussions and in-depth telephone interviews. The research covered:

- 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 NEC.

- 3.11 This year 67 people participated in this study (62 participants at seven focus groups and five telephone interviews). We intended to engage between six and ten people in a focus group, and achieved an average of nine participants at each group.
- 3.12 In designing the focus groups, we firstly considered two main factors – type of card and the group location. The research specification gave clear parameters for the study. It was to include, as far as possible, a variety of card holders; so those who have a card because of their age (a 60+ card) and those who have a card because of a disability (a disabled concessionary card, or a visually impaired concessionary card). Different types of disability were included in the research, for example, people with physical disabilities, and those who are blind or with visual impairments.
- 3.13 The groups and interviews covered a range of locations to give geographic diversity. The qualitative research covered seven different local authority areas⁵.
- 3.14 Six of the seven discussion groups took place with people who were members of existing organisations or groups. The groups consisted of a project for young people with a physical disability, two organisations supporting older people, a school for children with additional support needs, an organisation for people with mental health issues and a national charity working with blind and visually impaired people. The seventh group took place with re-contacts from the telephone survey who had agreed to participate in a group.
- 3.15 The location of the group 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.
- 3.16 This year we were keen to include people with a ‘Companion Card’, which allows people to travel with someone who can support them to travel. A discussion group was planned to take place with Companion Card holders who had taken part in the survey. However, there were not enough re-contacts from the survey with a Companion Card in any one local authority area to make this possible. Therefore, five people who had taken part in the survey and agreed to a focus group were invited to take part in a telephone interview.
- 3.17 In the course of conducting our discussions with participants from existing groups, we found that some participants were companion card holders. Of the 67 participants taking part in the research, 36 had a Companion Card (54%) demonstrating a ten percent increase in the number of Companion Card holders who participated in year one of this research (29 participants in year one (44%) held a Companion Card).

⁵ The local authority areas were: Clackmannanshire, Dundee, East Renfrewshire, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Moray and South Lanarkshire.

3.18 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 3.3: Location and characteristics of focus groups

Local Authority	Special features	Source	No. of participants
Focus groups			
Clackmannanshire	60+ card holders	Existing organisation	12
Dundee	60+ card holders	Re-contacts from survey	8
East Renfrewshire	Parents of disabled children	Existing organisation	8
Edinburgh	Blind and visually impaired people	Existing organisation	10
Edinburgh	Young disabled people	Existing organisation	5
Moray	60+ card holders	Existing organisation	9
South Ayrshire	People with mental health issues	Existing organisation	10
Companion Card interviews			
Glasgow	Companion Card	Re-contact from survey	3
Clackmannanshire	Companion Card	Re-contact from survey	1
Edinburgh	Companion Card	Re-contact from survey	1

Analysis and Reporting

3.19 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.

3.20 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.

4. THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Introduction

- 4.1 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 obtaining information on the scheme.

Source of Awareness

- 4.2 When asked about how first they became aware of the existence of the concessionary travel scheme, just under half of respondents said this was through word of mouth (47%), 10% said it was via media and 3% said they found out from the Council or at a Council office. The source of awareness profile is very similar to what was reported in 2013.

Table 4.1: Source of awareness of the Scheme

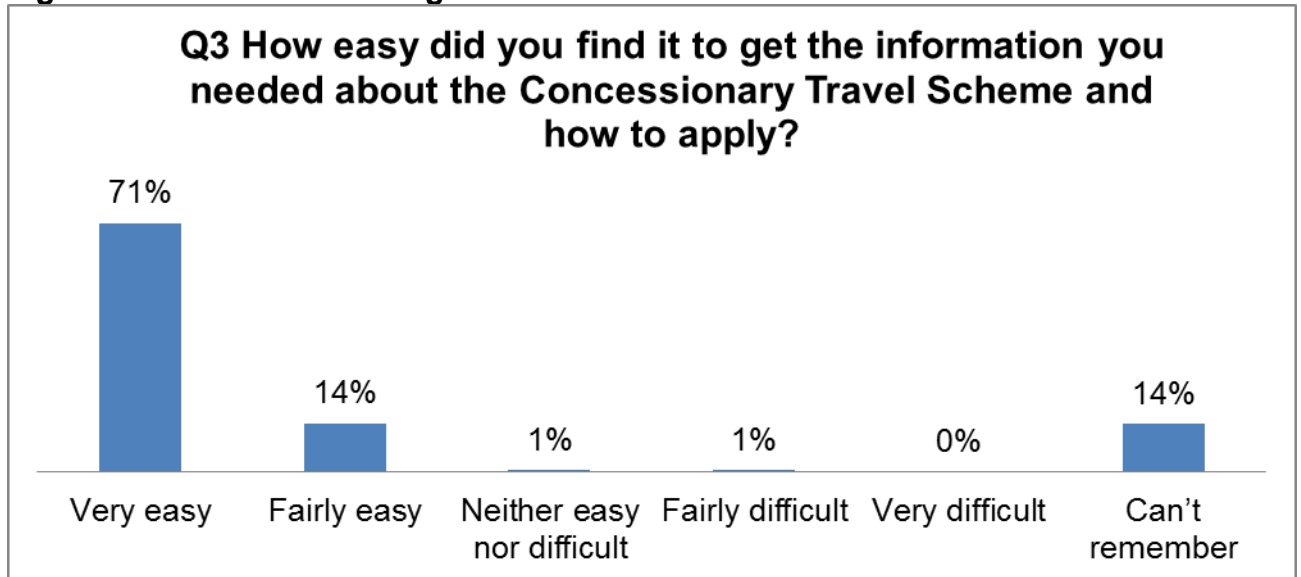
Q2 How did you first find out about the existence of the Scheme?		
Base: all respondents, n 2014=3088; n 2013=3127	2014 %	2013 %
Word of mouth - Through speaking friends/ family/ colleagues	47%	52%
Media (TV, radio, newspaper)	10%	10%
From the Council at a Council office/ One stop shop	3%	4%
My Council wrote to me directly	3%	2%
From my GP	2%	3%
From Social Work	2%	2%
Always known about it	2%	0%
At the Post Office	1%	2%
Advocacy or Support Group	1%	1%
From my library	1%	1%
On the internet	1%	0%
Hospital/ doctor/ nurse/ care worker	1%	0%
Other	1%	1%
From the Bus Station	0%	0%
Don't know/ can't remember	27%	25%

- 4.3 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 50% of 60+ card holders stating this was their source of awareness compared to 27% of visually impaired or disabled card holders. Those who held disabled or visually impaired cards were more likely to have heard about the scheme through their GP (11%) or Social Work (14%).

Ease of obtaining information

- 4.4 Over eight out of ten respondents (85%) said they found it very or fairly easy to obtain the information they needed about the concessionary travel scheme and how to apply, and 14% could not remember.

Figure 4.2: Ease of obtaining information



Base: All respondents, n=3088

- 4.5 Respondents with a disabled or visually impaired card were less likely to state that it was 'very easy' to find the information they needed on the concessionary travel scheme (56% compared to 73% of 60+ card holders).

Summary

- 4.6 Whilst the main sources of awareness of the NEC were informal, through word of mouth, respondent's found it easy to obtain the information they needed on the concessionary travel scheme.

5. USING THE CARD

Introduction

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

Using the card to travel by bus

- 5.2 The vast majority of respondents said they used the concessionary travel card to travel by bus (91%). 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.
- 5.3 Perhaps unsurprisingly, respondents living in urban areas were most likely to use their card to travel by bus (93%) whereas those living in remote rural areas least likely (80%). Analysis by transport area revealed that respondents in the Highland Transport area (81%) and the South West transport area (77%) were least likely to use their card to travel by bus. 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+.
- 5.4 Those who did not use the concessionary travel card to travel by bus were asked why. The main reasons were the respondent was still driving or preferred to travel by car (58%) or that a disability or their health prevented them from doing so (35%). These were also the two most commonly cited reasons for not using the card to travel by bus in 2013.

Table 5.1: Reasons for not using card to travel by bus

Q5 If not why not?		
Base: do not use card to travel by bus, n 2014= 285; n 2013=429	2014 %	2013 %
Still driving/ prefer to use the car	58%	33%
Don't use public transport due to health/ disability	35%	46%
There is no bus service where I live	10%	4%
Use the train due to lack of bus service/ its more practical/ easier	7%	6%
No need to use it	5%	5%
Too afraid to travel by bus	2%	1%
Use taxis	1%	5%
Try to walk everywhere as opposed to getting the bus	1%	1%
Lost my card	1%	1%
Card expired	1%	1%
Don't like using buses	0%	1%

5.5 Analysis of why respondents do not use the card to travel by bus showed that respondents who had a disabled or visually impaired card were more likely to say that they did not use public transport due to their health or disability (57%) or used taxis (7%). Those who held a 60+ card were more likely to say that they were still driving or preferred to use the car (62% compared to 23% of those with disabled or visually impaired cards). Additionally, respondents in rural areas and remote small towns were more likely to state that there was no bus service where they live as their reason for not using their card to travel by bus.

Other uses of the National Entitlement Card

5.6 Almost 4 out of 10 respondents (38%) said they had used their travel card for other things than free bus travel. This is the same level as was reported in 2013. This was significantly more likely to be the case in the Strathclyde (53%) and Shetland (53%) transport areas and least likely to be the case in the South West (13%).

5.7 These individuals were asked what other uses they had for their travel card. The majority stated, as was also the case in 2013, that they use it for train travel (68%).

Table 5.2: Other uses of National Entitlement Card

Q6 Do you use the Card for anything other than free bus travel?		
Base: use card for activities other than free bus travel n 2014=1159; n 2013 =998	2014 %	2013 %
Train travel	68%	69%
Identification	22%	16%
Library	11%	9%
Leisure services	8%	9%
Swimming	5%	5%
Ferry	5%	4%
Other	1%	1%
Taxi card	1%	0%

5.8 Analysis by age revealed that respondents aged under 65 were significantly more likely to use their card for leisure services than those aged over 65 (15% of under 65s compared to 5% of over 65s).

5.9 Geographical analysis indicated that respondents living in the Strathclyde transport area were significantly more likely to state that they used their card also for train travel (87%). Those living in Highland (37%) and Shetland (70%) transport areas were significantly more likely to state that they used their card for ferry travel.

5.10 The focus groups revealed that the majority of people used their NEC on buses. This included local buses, intercity buses and more so this year, national buses from Glasgow or Edinburgh to Inverness, Aberdeen or Aviemore for example.

5.11 A few participants had used their NEC for discounted travel on train journeys. Some blind and visually impaired participants stated they used the train regularly. Some participants found it confusing that each local authority charged a different rate for their companion.

“I’m blind with a Companion Card and I can use the card on the train to go anywhere in Scotland – but my companion can’t. In Glasgow, my companion is a half fare...but it changes depending where you are. It can be embarrassing to be pulled up by the driver and told that the companion has to pay. It can be a problem.”

(Male, Companion Card holder)

5.12 Three blind and visually impaired participants also commented on using their NEC for travel on ferries. There were mixed views about how often this was allowed using the card; with some using it for two trips a year, while another said they travelled monthly on the ferry.

5.13 A few participants, particularly those in rural areas, had used their card to access the dial-a-bus service, whereby a bus collects and drops-off passengers from their home address.

5.14 Other participants reported using the NEC for discounted entry to museums, to the cinema, leisure facilities such as swimming pools and one participant had used the NEC for taking out library books.

“I’ve been to lots of museums, like the Portrait Gallery in Edinburgh and I used the pass to get a discount.”

(Male, older person’s group)

5.15 One group of participants included parents of disabled children. These parents reported that they did have Companion Cards allowing them to travel for free with their children – but the majority chose not to use public transport. These parents reported they found it too stressful to travel with their children on public transport. This was based on their experiences with other passengers complaining about their children’s behaviour or the parents’ feeling too embarrassed to stay on the bus as a result of their child’s behaviour. Many of the children had autism or Tourettes syndrome.

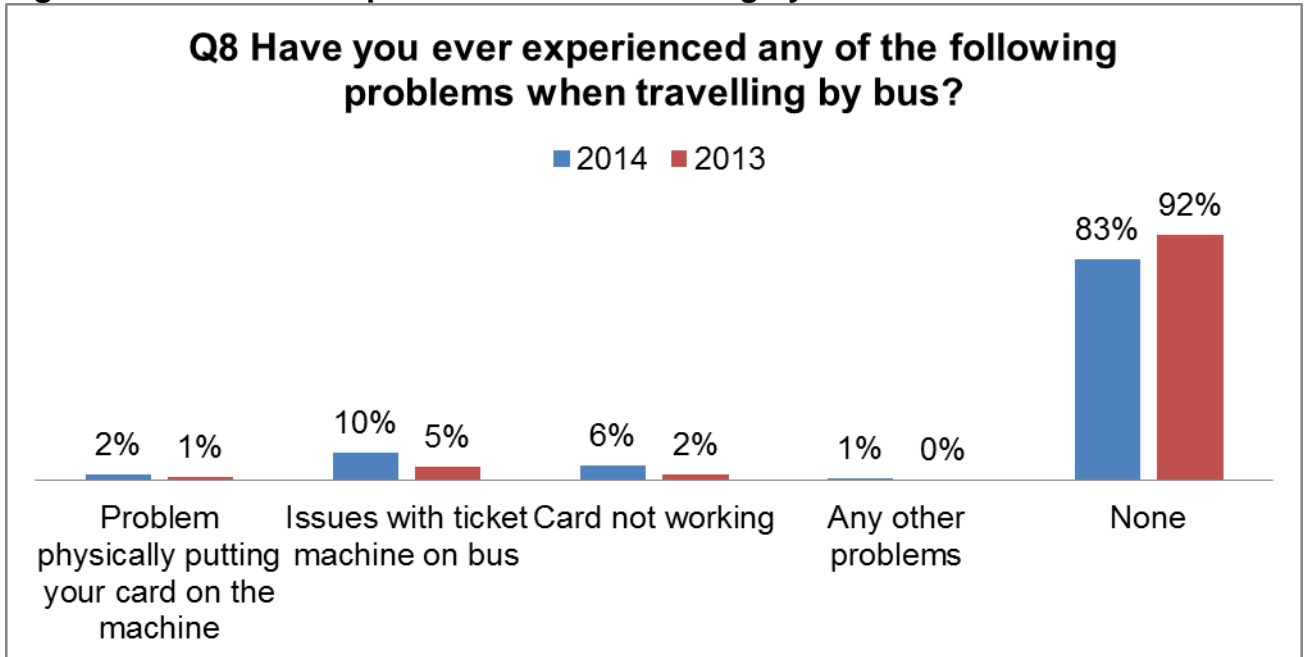
“I wouldn’t take him on public transport – he’s unpredictable.”

(Female, parent - disabled children’s group)

Problems experienced when travelling by bus

- 5.16 Almost 1 in 5 respondents who use their card for bus travel (17%) said that they had experienced problems with their card when travelling by bus. This is a significant increase compared to 2013 where 8% stated that they had experienced a problem. The most commonly cited problems were in relation to issues with the ticket machine which was experienced by 1 in 10 respondents. This was most likely to be the case in the Strathclyde transport region (13%) and the South East (12%).

Figure 5.3: Problems experienced when travelling by bus



Base: use card to travel by bus; n 2014=2803, n 2013=2697

- 5.17 A total of 50 survey respondents said they had a problem physically putting the card on the machine. Of these, 36 were disabled or visually impaired card holders. When asked to explain the difficulty the majority stated that their mobility was reduced so that either their carer or the driver would help them to put their card on the machine.
- 5.18 This was mirrored by focus group respondents where a number of blind and visually impaired participants reported some difficulties when trying to access the bus, such as locating the card reader, which was not always in the same position on every bus. Some participants had found driver's to be helpful and scan their NEC for them; while others had been left to do it themselves, which they found frustrating – particularly when the bus was busy.

“There is a hole to put the card through, but it can be difficult to find. Sometimes the driver will take the card and scan it, but sometimes they won't.”

(Female, blind and visually impaired group)

“There’s quite a lot of things to ask the driver, like where the scanner is, and if they can tell me when we get to my destination and this can be hard in a busy city centre when there are lots of other people waiting to get on the bus.”

(Female, blind and visually impaired group)

- 5.19 Participants from the blind and visually impaired discussion reported that Guide Dogs for the Blind had carried out training with Stagecoach bus drivers in response to their comments of poor driver attitude. Participants reported that they had since seen a positive change in the drivers’ attitude towards blind passengers.

“It suddenly got good. It was an overnight change. It’s good to see it worked.”

(Male, blind and visually impaired group)

7 day pass

- 5.20 Of those who stated that they had experienced their card not working (157 respondents), 43% 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.

- 5.21 Some focus group participants had also had to receive a new card because theirs had been lost or broken. There were nine participants who reported their card had broken or cracked. All were issued with a seven day pass by the driver and received their new cards quickly.

“Another time my card snapped on the machine. The driver held onto it and told me a number to phone to get a new one. It came within a week.”

(Female, Companion Card holder)

Multiple concessionary cards

- 5.22 Just 2% of respondents (n=55) stated that they have more than one concessionary bus pass that they use for travel. Most commonly, respondents stated that they didn’t know why they had more than one card (23 respondents). Other commonly cited reasons for having more than one card were that they have residence in more than one Scottish local authority area (14 respondents), that they had an additional card ‘simply for convenience’ (5 respondents) and that they had ordered a new card as they had lost their card and had subsequently found it (4 respondents).

- 5.23 In the focus groups, unlike in year one when three participants admitted to having more than one card, this year none of the participants stated they had multiple NECs.

“You’re only allowed one card.”

(Female, older person’s group)

Misuse of the card

- 5.24 Just 0.5% of respondents (15 respondents) stated that they have ever given their card to anyone else to use.
- 5.25 Only 2% of respondents (55 respondents) said they had seen or experienced abuse or misuse of the bus pass. When asked about the type of behaviour they had seen or experienced, the most common reasons given were that they had seen the driver refusing people for trying to use someone else's card (26 respondents) or the respondent perceived the driver printing the wrong destination on the ticket to be abuse or misuse of the bus pass (13 respondents).
- 5.26 As was also the case in year one, the majority of focus group participants were not aware of any examples of misuse. A few participants commented that the photograph printed onto the card made fraudulent use more difficult, while others thought that it would be easy to use a card that did not belong to you, because the driver rarely checks the photograph.

"It would be easy (to misuse the card); drivers rarely check your photo."

(Male, older person's group)

"The photo on it – it's scanned on, it's not stuck on, so it can't be faked."

(Female, rural group)

- 5.27 At two discussion groups with older participants, there were comments relating to the number of "young people" who appeared to have a NEC. The inference from the older participants was that young people must be using the card fraudulently. There was very little awareness among older participants that young people could have a card because of a disability; and that disabilities need not be physical.

"You tell me...how is it these young folk have a card. They're at it!"

(Female, rural group)

"I see it abused a lot – young people who look fit...I get the impression they are abusing the scheme."

(Male, older person's group)

- 5.28 One participant with a visual impairment said that he is often challenged as to why he has a NEC, because he "doesn't look disabled."

"I've had people look at me and say 'why the hell have you got a pass?' I'm not walking about with a sign on my head that says 'I can't see' so I do get discriminated against."

(Male, Companion Card holder)

- 5.29 Almost three in ten respondents (29%) said they were aware that they can report abuse of the scheme to Transport Scotland's hotline. This is a marginal increase from 26% in 2013. Respondents who lived in the South West (33%) and the Strathclyde transport (32%) areas were most aware of this and respondents in the Shetland transport area least likely to be aware (12%).
- 5.30 Focus group participants were asked specifically whether they were aware that they could report misuse to Transport Scotland through their helpline. Only one group of older adults were aware of this; and one had used it to report the group's concerns of over-staging. They spoke positively of the service they received.
- 5.31 While other participants were not previously aware of the hotline, all were pleased that such a service existed should they need it. They were reassured that Transport Scotland was taking misuse of the NEC seriously with the establishment of the helpline.

"I'm impressed there is a hotline."

(Male, older person's group)

Companion cards

- 5.32 Those who had a companion card (n=225) were asked how often they had someone travelling with them as their companion. Just over 4 in 10 of these individuals (44%) said this was every time they travelled, 26% said it was most of the time, 20% said some of the time, 8% said rarely and 1% said they never have a companion travelling with them. This is a relatively similar profile to the 2013 survey.
- 5.33 In the discussions with Companion Card holders, they did not report any issues when getting on the bus with a companion. Their companions always travelled for free and without any challenge from the driver. However, some participants commented that although they were entitled to travel with someone; they might choose to travel alone. When presenting the 'plus one' card to the driver some people had been challenged as to why they needed a Companion Card, if they were able to travel without a companion. This had made these participants feel vulnerable and upset.

"I felt stigmatised and uncomfortable – the driver made comments and didn't believe I needed a card."

(Female, people with mental health issues group)

"The drivers don't like it when I get on without a companion. The drivers think that if I can travel without a companion then I don't need a card."

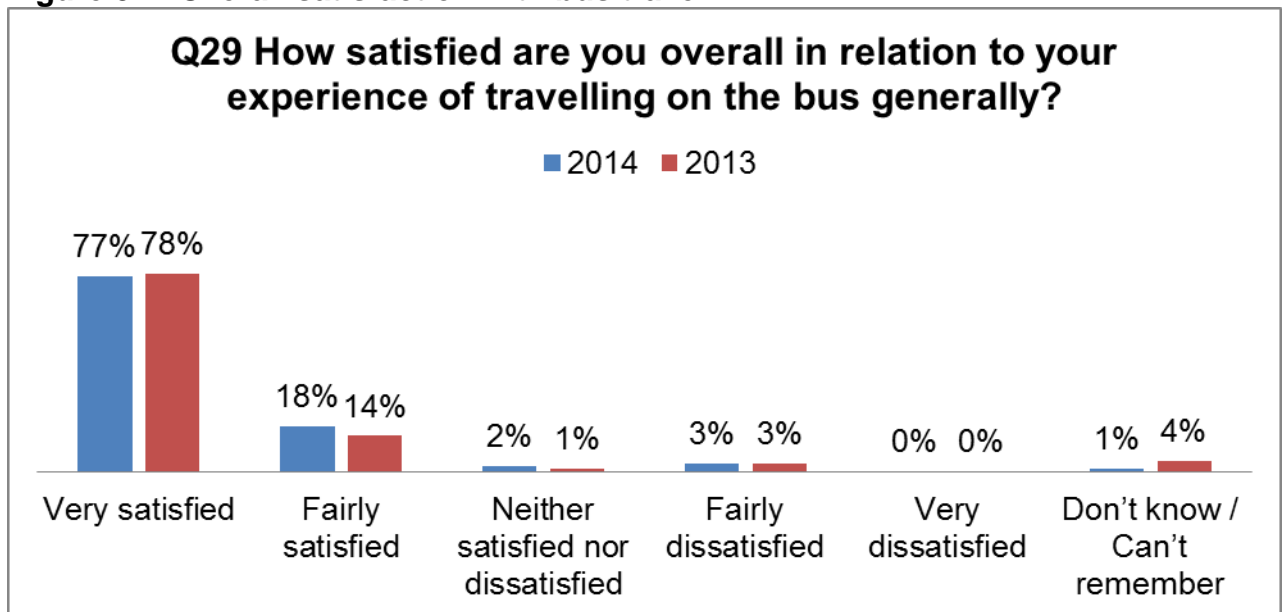
(Female, people with mental health issues group)

5.34 One young, disabled participant spoke of how she was nervous about travelling on the bus because she was unsteady on her feet. She has since been allocated an ‘assistance card’ by her GP. The card allows the passenger to attach relevant icons to the card alerting the driver to their specific needs. For example, this participant had added stickers indicating she has both visual and mobility problems as well as problems with her speech. She reported that this card had made a “huge difference” to her experience on the bus.

Overall satisfaction with bus travel

5.35 More than 9 in 10 respondents (95%) expressed satisfaction in relation to their experience of travelling on the bus generally compared to 3% who said they were dissatisfied. These are very similar levels of satisfaction to 2013.

Figure 5.4: Overall satisfaction with bus travel



Base: use their card to travel on the bus; n 2014=2803, n 2013=2697

5.36 Whilst there are clearly very low levels of dissatisfaction, analysis by transport area revealed that respondents in the South West (95%), Highlands and Islands (84%) and Shetland (82%) transport areas had the largest proportion of respondents stating they were very satisfied. On the other hand, those who lived in the Strathclyde transport area (70%) had the lowest proportion stating they were very satisfied.

5.37 Disabled and visually impaired card holders were marginally less likely to be ‘very satisfied’ with bus travel overall than 60+ card holders (65% compared to 78% very satisfied).

5.38 Those who were dissatisfied (n=81) were asked to give their reasons for feeling this way. The main reasons given were that buses were perceived as being old, dirty, unpleasant or uncomfortable to travel in (23 respondents), that the route or timing of the buses were inconvenient (18 respondents), that drivers attitude was poor (14 respondents), or that buses could be unreliable or too infrequent (9 respondents).

5.39 The focus groups also identified some dissatisfaction in relation to bus travel, in particular relating to driver attitude. There were examples from participants of drivers moving off before people had the chance to sit down, or apparent refusals to provide a ramp for wheelchair users.

“Some drivers won’t lower the ramp; they’ll say the bus will tip up if they put it down.”

(Male, older person’s group)

“I’ve had drivers tell me that ‘people like me shouldn’t be out ‘and others refuse to let me on – they see me at the bus stop in all weathers and just drive on because they can’t be bothered to lower the ramp.”

(Female, Companion Card holder)

5.40 However, there were also some positive examples this year of good driver behaviour, although these were in the minority, with two participants able to provide examples of where they felt they had good service from the driver.

“We had food shopping and my husband walks with two sticks; the driver took us beyond our stop and dropped us at our front door. That’s the one and only time I’ve seen them do that.”

(Female, older person’s group)

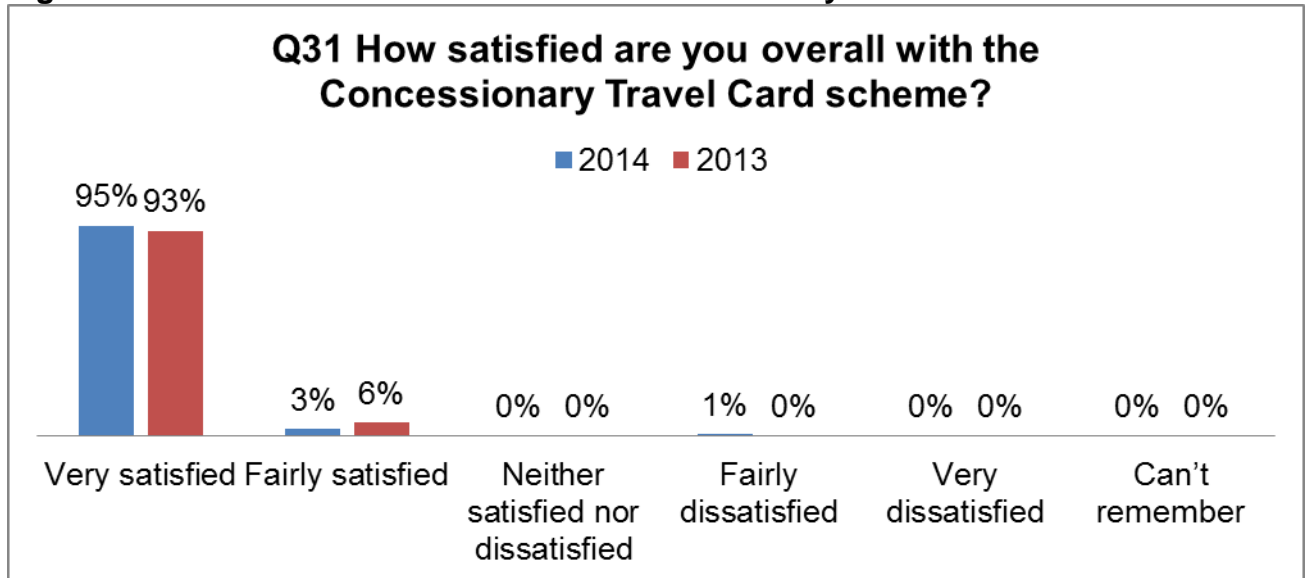
“The bus was busy, but he lowered the platform and helped this woman on with her wheelchair and got her in position before driving off.”

(Male, older person’s group)

Overall satisfaction with Concessionary Travel Scheme

5.41 Following on from this, respondents were asked how satisfied they were overall with the concessionary travel card scheme. As was the case in 2013, satisfaction was extremely high with 98% of all respondents stating they were either very or fairly satisfied in this respect.

Figure 5.5: Overall satisfaction with the Concessionary Travel Card scheme



Base: use their card to travel on the bus; n 2014=2803, n 2013=2697

5.42 The North East transport area had the lowest proportion of respondents stating they were 'very satisfied' when compared to other areas (92%). Again, respondents holding a disabled or visually impaired card were marginally less likely to state that they were very satisfied (93%).

Summary

5.43 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.

5.44 Overall, the experience of travelling by bus was very satisfactory. Respondents could identify very few problems when travelling by bus, although, disabled and visually impaired 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.

6. HOW AND WHY THE CARD IS USED

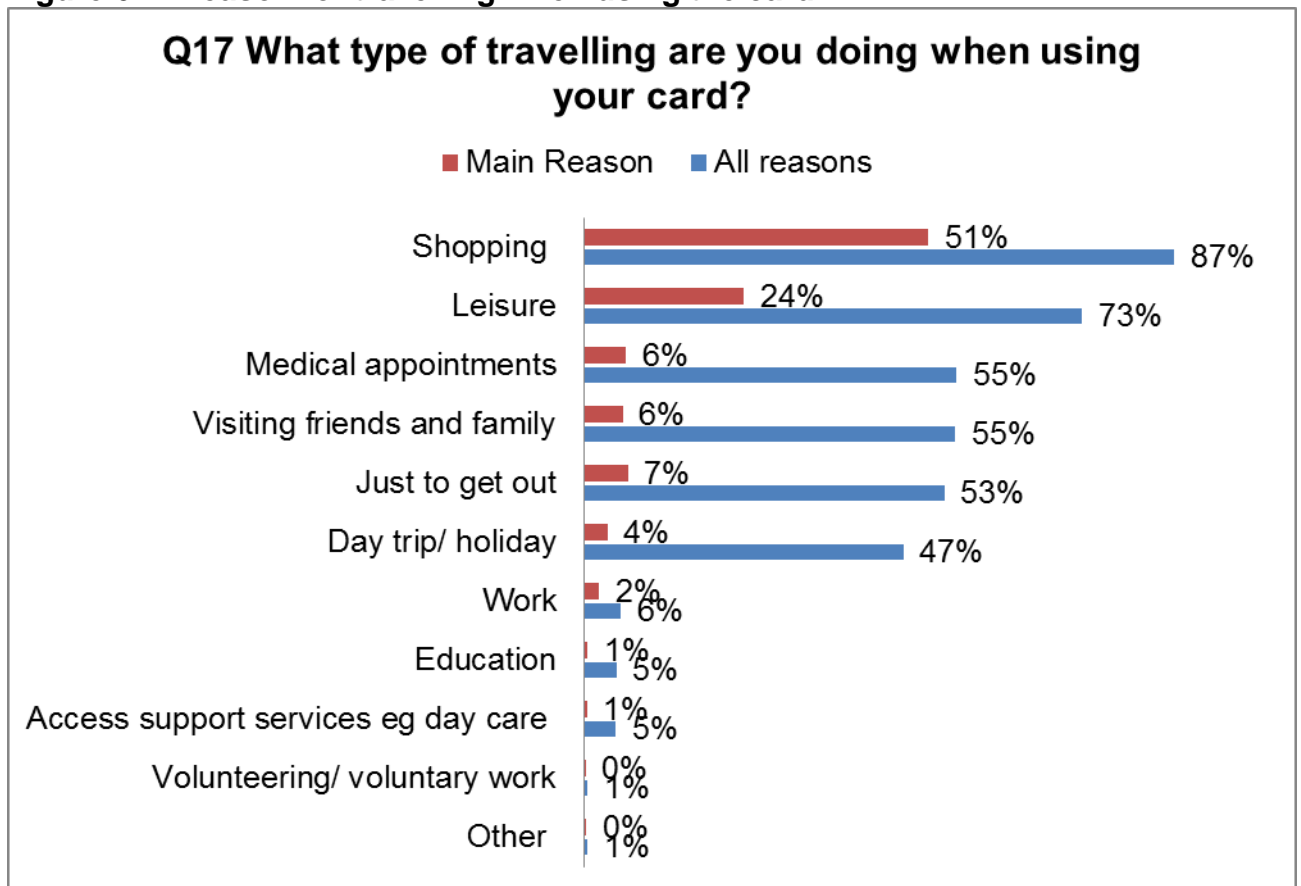
Introduction

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

Reasons for travelling

6.2 Respondents were asked about the type of travelling that they do when using the card. The responses given were very similar to those reported in 2013, with the most common type of travelling respondents reported doing when using their card was shopping (87%) followed by leisure (73%). Over half stated that they use the card for medical appointments (55%), for visiting friends and family (55%) or just to get out (53%). In terms of the main reason for using the card, again shopping was the most popular response (51%), followed by leisure (24%) and just to get out (7%).

Figure 6.1: Reason for travelling when using the card



Base: use their card for bus travel, n=2803

- 6.3 There was, unsurprisingly, a significantly lower proportion of those aged over 65 using their card for work purposes, with just over one in twenty respondents aged under 65 (12%) stating that they used their card for work purposes compared to just 4% of those aged over 65.
- 6.4 Analysis by card type indicated that those with disabled or visually impaired cards were more likely use their card for medical appointments (16% compared to 5% of 60+ card holder). They were also more likely to use their card most frequently for accessing support services (4%) or education (3%) than 60+ card holders.
- 6.5 Card holders with the 60+ card were more likely to use the card most often for social and leisure purposes with 86% 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 visually impaired card holders.
- 6.6 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. Others commented that the NEC was often used for convenience. This was particularly true if travelling into town or city centres. Participants noted that the bus was often quicker and less hassle than trying to negotiate traffic, or find a parking space in the city, or at hospitals.

“It depends on the time of day of the appointment, because it can be useless to try and take the car (to hospital).”

(Male, Companion Card holder)

Change in journey patterns due to concessionary scheme

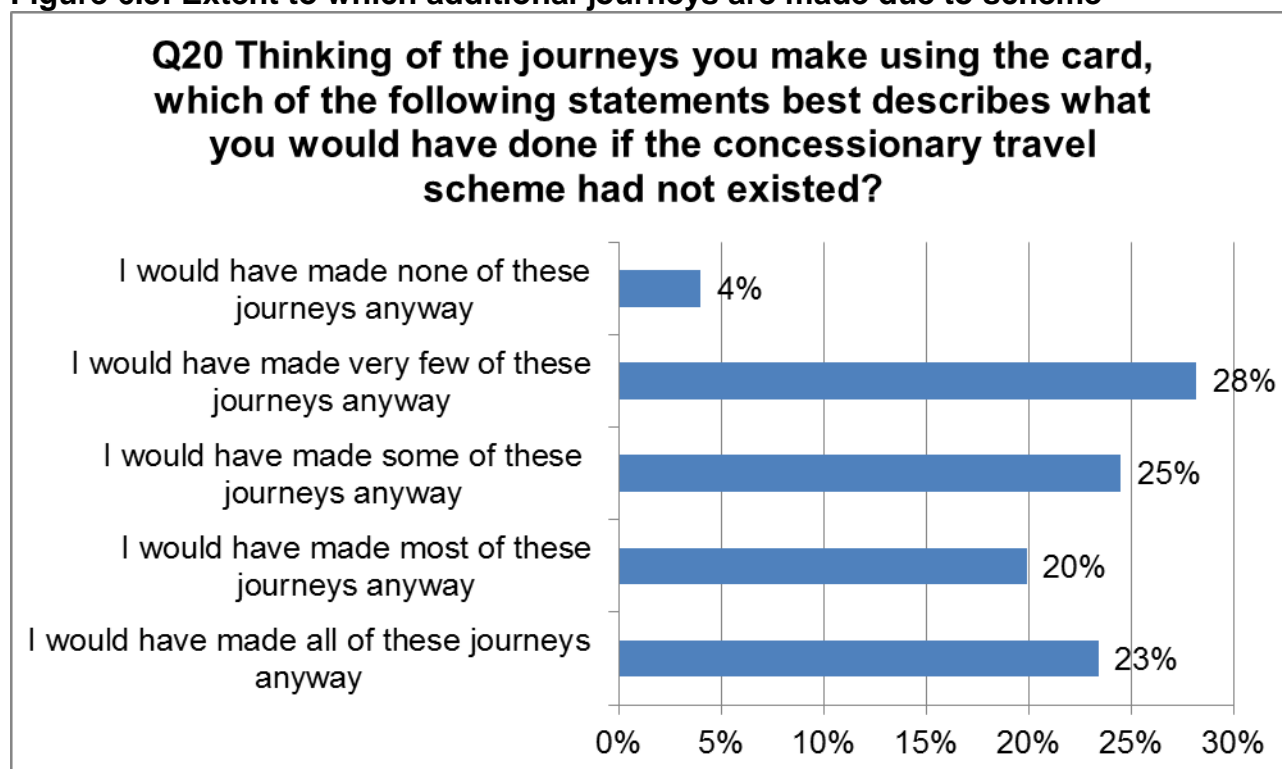
- 6.7 Almost half of respondents (48%) stated that they make journeys now using their card that they would not have made if they did not have their concessionary travel card. In the main, these are social journeys which involve day trips / visiting friends and relatives (44%).

Table 6.2: Type of additional journeys made

Q19 Can you describe what sort of journeys you make that you would not make if you did not have your concessionary travel card?	
Base: use card for journeys that would not have made if did not have card, n=1355	%
Day trips/ visiting friends and relatives	44%
Shopping trips/ get into town more	27%
Longer distance journeys/ can go further afield	13%
Leisure purposes/ club/ gym etc	11%
All journeys/ a lot of them	10%
To get out and about more	9%
Would be too expensive otherwise/ wouldn't have been able to afford to go out as much	9%
Doctors/ pharmacy/ hospital appointments	3%
Other	1%

6.8 Thinking of all the journeys respondents make using the card, just 23% stated that they would have made all of these journeys anyway. As such, 77% of respondents are making some additional journeys that they would not have done if the concessionary travel scheme had not existed. Indeed, almost one third (32%) would have made either none or very few of these journeys.

Figure 6.3: Extent to which additional journeys are made due to scheme



Base: use card for bus travel, n=2803

6.9 In order to identify whether the concessionary scheme was encouraging a modal shift, respondents who stated that they would have made all, some or most of the journeys anyway were asked how they would have made these journeys. Whilst over half of respondents (58%) stated they would have made most of the journeys by bus, 34% stated that they would have made most of the journeys by car indicating that a significant proportion of respondents are encouraged to use the bus as opposed to car due to the concessionary travel scheme.

6.10 This shift was most likely to be encouraged in rural areas where, for example in accessible rural areas, 43% stated that they would have previously made their journeys by car and in remote rural areas where 45% stated that they would have made these journeys by car.

6.11 This finding was supported in the qualitative research where it was found that people were now using the bus more than before they had a card. There were some examples of modal shift. This included people who had never used the bus before having their card who now used it frequently, and those who chose the bus over alternative forms of transport.

“Before I got the card I was maybe on a bus once a fortnight – now I’m on a bus every day....”

(Male, older person’s group)

6.12 In comparison to year one, participants in this year’s focus groups had used their NEC to travel further distances. Older participants in particular spoke of using their NEC for day trips around Scotland. Journeys which they may not previously have made or would have made using the car.

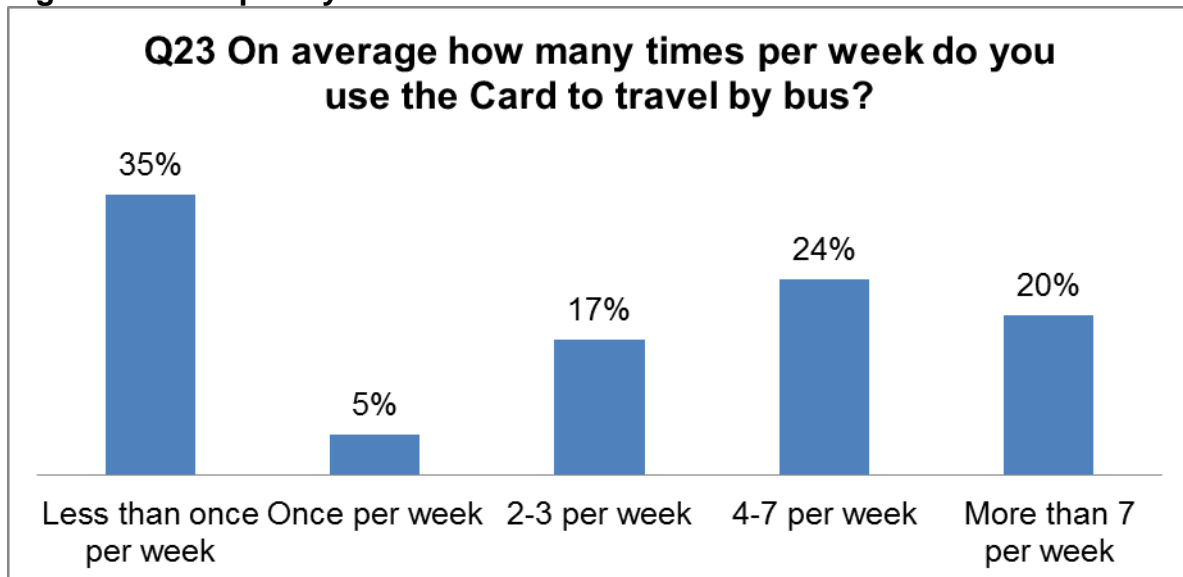
“We’ve been to Oban and Fort William – it’s beautiful and my husband said he’d never seen so much scenery because he was always driving and paying attention to the road.”

(Female, older person’s group)

Frequency of travel

6.13 With regards to the frequency of travel, almost half of respondents (44%) travelled by bus at least 4 times per week.

Figure 6.4: Frequency of travel



Base: use card for bus travel, n=2803

- 6.14 Analysis by area indicates that those who live in the Highlands and Islands area were significantly less likely to use their card on a weekly basis than other areas (44% used weekly). Respondents in the South East and Strathclyde areas were most likely to travel by bus more frequently than in other areas with 25% and 24% respectively stating that they use their card more than 7 times per week.
- 6.15 Disabled or visually impaired card holders were more likely to travel by bus more frequently with 57% travelling by bus using their card 4 or more times per week compared to 42% of 60+ card holders.
- 6.16 Participants in almost all focus groups reported that they used their NEC very frequently. The exceptions to this were when participants were still driving and used their NEC for specific journeys – most notably when parking at their destination was an issue.
- 6.17 However, for the group of participants based in a rural area, there was an issue with the frequency of the buses, which determined when and how often they could travel. Participants reported that some buses were every two hours, with the last bus of the day at 6pm. This restricted their ability to travel and some participants referred to the last bus as their “curfew”.

“You can’t go out at night because the last bus is at 6pm.”

(Female, rural group)

Distance travelled

- 6.18 When asked about the sorts of distances normally travelled varied when using the card, 32% said they typically travel less than 5 miles, 20% said between 5 and 10 miles, 18% said 10 to 25 miles and 14% said more than 25 miles.

6.19 Analysis by area revealed significant differences in the distance travelled with respondents who lived in Highlands and Islands area were most likely to use their card for longer distances of 50 miles or over (26%). This is compared to the Strathclyde where 53% used their card to travel less than 10 miles and just 3% to travel distances of 50 miles or over.

Table 6.5: Normal distance travelled when using the card by transport area

Q22 What sort of distance do you normally travel when using your card by transport area								
	Overall	Shetland	North East	Highlands and Islands	Tayside and Central	Strathclyde	South West	South East
Base: use card for bus travel	2803	17	231	236	338	1088	80	813
Under 1 mile	2%	-	1%	1%	1%	2%	-	2%
1 to under 2 miles	8%	-	7%	3%	14%	7%	1%	9%
2 to under 5 miles	22%	18%	18%	17%	32%	22%	13%	20%
5 to under 10 miles	20%	12%	7%	14%	16%	22%	19%	24%
10 to under 25 miles	18%	29%	23%	23%	22%	17%	40%	12%
25 to under 50 miles	8%	18%	23%	9%	6%	7%	13%	6%
50 miles and over	6%	18%	10%	26%	5%	3%	11%	1%
No normal distance of travel/ varies	11%	-	2%	6%	5%	12%	4%	17%
Don't know/ can't remember	7%	6%	7%	2%	0%	8%	-	11%

6.20 Respondents living in urban areas were significantly more likely to use their card to travel shorter distances with 41% of respondents in large urban areas reporting that they usually travel distances of less than 5 miles using their card. This is compared to respondents in remote rural areas where 48% reported usually using their card for distances of over 25 miles.

Seasonality of travel

- 6.21 Almost half of respondents (47%) stated that there were times of the year that they travelled using their card more regularly than others. Most commonly, respondents stated summer time (59%) or during winter/ Christmas time (40%).

Summary

- 6.22 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 cards were more likely to use their cards to travel for medical appointments, support or education purposes.
- 6.23 There was significant evidence of additional journeys being made that would not have been made in the absence of the card. In particular, these additional journeys were social and leisure journeys. Even where respondents stated that they would have made the majority of the journeys that they made using the card anyway, there was evidence of a modal shift with respondents more likely to take the bus than drive, than would have previously been the case.
- 6.24 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 Highlands and Islands area, were significantly more likely to use their card to travel longer distances and less likely to use their card as frequently as in other areas. This was in comparison to those living in the Strathclyde and South East areas who were most likely to travel shorter distances and use their card more frequently.

7. BENEFITS OF THE SCHEME

Introduction

- 7.1 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. It also explored the extent to which card holders believed that having the card helps them maintain or improve their physical health and sense of wellbeing. The focus groups also sought to identify recommendations for improvement to the scheme.

Important aspects of the scheme

- 7.2 Respondents were asked what they believed were the most important aspects of having a concessionary travel card. This revealed that, in common with 2013, the two most common responses were that it saves money or is free (70%), it gives independence and freedom (46%) and it enables respondents to get out of the house (34%).
- 7.3 When asked to select the aspect which was most important to them, 43% of respondents selected the financial aspects of the card and that it saves them money. This was followed by giving them independence or freedom (22%).

Table 7.1: Most important aspects of having the NEC

Q25 (a) What aspects of having a Concessionary Travel Card are important to you? And (b) which would you say is most important?		
Base: use card for bus travel, n=2808	All	Most important
Saving money/ free	70%	43%
Gives me independence/ freedom	46%	22%
Gets me out of the house	34%	10%
Allows me to get to places that I can't park my car i.e. hospital	23%	8%
It allows me to socialise more	17%	2%
I can travel with confidence/ safely	15%	2%
Convenient/ easy to use	8%	4%
Do not need to carry money/ look for change	5%	2%
It gives me confidence that I can travel in other ways/ allows me to avoid driving/ can use as emergency/ back up	4%	2%
Being able to use it at swimming/ leisure facilities	4%	0.2%
Ability to use bus or the train	2%	1%
Allows me to go on longer journeys that I wouldn't otherwise	1%	1%
Allows me to enjoy travelling/ relax	1%	0.5%
None	1%	1%
The ability to have a companion with me	1%	0.3%
Environmentally friendly	0.7%	0.5%
Other	0.7%	0.4%
Don't know/ no response	0.1%	0.1%

- 7.4 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 (44%) than disabled or visually impaired card holders (30%). On the other hand, having independence and freedom was cited as the most important aspect of the card for disabled or visually impaired card holders (37%) than 60+ card holders (19%).
- 7.5 In the focus group discussions, the benefits mentioned were very similar to those reported in year one. Participants found it difficult to state which was the most important benefit for them; as they were all perceived to be important. Benefits of the NEC included the financial savings from the card, the independence the card offered, the way it tackles social isolation by encouraging people to get out of the house and in turn, the way it can improve the quality of life for many people. Below we look in more detail at the benefits as mentioned by participants.

Financial savings

- 7.6 A key benefit of the scheme was the financial savings that the card provided. Some participants reported that they had made considerable savings on their travel costs by using the NEC.
- “I travel twice a week to Perth; it’s £14.70 return; so that’s £28 a week, plus a few trips to the shops...it adds up very quickly.”*
(Female, older person’s group)
- 7.7 Older participants spoke of how the free bus travel motivated them to go out – which meant that even when they did not have any money – they were not confined to the house.
- “It costs £15 to Aberdeen or £6.50 to Inverness – you couldn’t afford to travel too far without the card.”*
(Female, rural group)
- “It allows you to get out and about far more than you would’ve done if you were paying for it.”*
(Female, older person’s group)

Reduces isolation

- 7.8 Participants felt strongly that the NEC gave people the means to get out and about, thus reducing the likelihood of social isolation. 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”.
- “There are social benefits of having the bus pass – older people can get out of the house.”*
(Female, rural group)

"I can get out and about. Before I might have thought 'oh I can't be bothered' but not now."

(Female, Companion Card holder)

Independence and confidence

- 7.9 The sense of independence was noted by all participants, but particularly disabled participants felt this was a benefit to them, as it meant they did not have to rely on others to travel.

"It has given me choice and I'm less reliant on others."

(Male, blind and visually impaired group)

"It gives me more independence."

(Female, people with mental health issues group)

"The scheme is a fantastic investment. It enables inclusion and confidence. I'm extremely grateful for the card as it means less planning, and makes you feel closer to normal society."

(Male, blind and visually impaired group)

- 7.10 The young disabled participants believed they were more independent now because of the card; and their parents agreed. Organisations working with disabled young people arranged for them to practice using their cards to increase their confidence on school trips and social visits. Parents reported that they had seen their children's confidence increase since having the card.

"He's much more confident – he travels on the bus alone and visits his gran after school - that takes two buses."

(Male, parent - disabled children's group)

"We've used our card for two or three years and it's a godsend. It gives her more independence."

(Female, parent - disabled children's group)

Spontaneity

- 7.11 Some participants also commented on their renewed sense of spontaneity with the card. They were able to 'get up and go' without having to plan ahead, or ensure they had enough money to travel.

"You don't have to think about it; you can just go and decide to go out that day – as long as you have enough money for a cup of tea."

(Female, rural group)

Convenience

- 7.12 Those participants who were driving and had access to a car indicated that in some circumstances, the bus was a more convenient way of travelling to their destination than driving and having to find space to park.

“It’s cheaper and I don’t have to park in the city.”

(Male, older person’s group)

Changes to travel method

- 7.13 Telephone survey respondents were asked about any changes to travel methods as a result of having the concessionary travel card. Just over half of respondents (53%) agreed that the travel card had indeed changed their travel method. This is an increase from 43% in 2013. 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.
- 7.14 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 bus more (74%) and 41% stated that they now use the car less frequently. Interestingly, almost one in ten (9%) said that they walk more than they used to.

Impact of the scheme on physical health and mental wellbeing

- 7.15 Just over half of respondents (51%) stated that they feel that having the concessionary travel card helps them maintain, or improve, their physical health.
- 7.16 Respondents with disabled or visual cards were more likely to state that they believed having their card had a positive impact on their physical health (55%). This was most notably due to the fact that respondents stated that they do more walking/ walk to the bus stop (46%) or that it simply gets them out of the house/ out and about (44%).

Table 6.2: Reasons why having the NEC helps physical health

Q28a Can you explain how the Card helps your physical health?	%
Base: card helps maintain or improve physical health, n=1391	%
Doing more walking/ walk to bus stop	46%
Gets me out of the house/ out and about	44%
Makes me exercise/ more active	13%
Bus helps as struggle to walk/ can't walk far	10%
Can go to leisure facilities e.g. swimming, gym	4%
Gets me to appointments e.g. hospital, medical	3%
Less stressful than driving	2%
Able to socialise	1%
Other	1%

- 7.17 In terms of its impact on mental wellbeing, 63% of respondents stated that they feel that having the concessionary travel card helps them maintain, or improve, their sense of mental wellbeing.
- 7.18 This was most notably the case in Strathclyde where 69% stated they believe that having the card helps them improve or maintain their sense of mental wellbeing. It was also significantly more likely to be the case for respondents with disabled or visually impaired cards where 77% of respondents with this type of card stated that they believed having their card helped them improve or maintain their sense of mental wellbeing.
- 7.19 Respondents explained why they believed that having the card helped their sense of mental wellbeing. They reported that it made them feel good to get out and about (38%), that it helped them socialise more and meet new people (26%) and that it helped them feel more independent (21%).

Table 6.3: Reasons why having the NEC helps mental wellbeing

Q28b Can you explain how the Card helps your sense of well-being?	
Base: card helps maintain or improve mental wellbeing, n=1684	%
Gets me out the house/ makes me feel good to get out and about	38%
More socialising/ meet new people	26%
Feel more independent/ freedom	21%
Cheaper/ wouldn't have been able to afford otherwise/ don't have to worry about finances	12%
Less stressful/ don't have to worry about parking	11%
Happy to have it/ handy to know it's there if needed	7%
Become more active/ mobile	5%
Can go visit family/ see them more	4%
Can use for leisure purposes e.g. cinema	3%
Can get to appointments e.g. doctors, hospital	1%
Other	1%

Improvements to the NEC scheme

- 7.20 Focus group participants were asked if they could suggest any improvements to the National Entitlement Card scheme. Participants with disabilities specifically mentioned a need for improvements in drivers' disability awareness.

"It's just the drivers in [local authority] that need educating and who make comments when we try to use our cards."

(Male, people with mental health issues group)

- 7.21 Also mentioned as a possible improvement was to extend the scheme to cover train travel. Already some participants enjoyed discounted fares on local trains, but some would have preferred for this to be free travel under the scheme. Parents of disabled children mentioned that it would be easier to travel on the train, than on the bus with their children as they said they could more easily plan to catch a train than wait for a bus. 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.

“The best possible scenario would be free rail travel.”

(Female, people with mental health issues group)

“If the card could be used on the train, then we’d use it more often.”

(Female, parent - disabled children’s group)

- 7.22 Blind and visually impaired participants suggested that all the NECs issued to those with a visual impairment should include a companion (all should be C+1 rather than just C). They felt that conditions could be degenerative and it would be easier if they had the option from the start to have a companion (and companion travel should be free on all forms of transport).

“Visually impaired people have no choice but to travel assisted; we can’t see the built environment.”

(Male, blind and visually impaired group)

“Every blind person requiring a concessionary travel card should have a Companion Card – there shouldn’t be ‘plus ones’ as sometimes conditions are degenerative and it’s hard to explain that it’s got worse.”

(Female, blind and visually impaired group)

- 7.23 Participants from the rural area commented on the need for more frequent buses. Some routes were served with only one bus every two hours and participants commented that this restricted their ability to travel.

“If only we had more buses.”

(Female, rural group)

- 7.24 And there was a general comment that it would be useful to have some information available that sets out where you can use your NEC and what discounts it would allow you. Some participants spoke of being confused as to how much discount their companion was entitled to; while others said it would be useful to know where else the card could be used, like cinemas and leisure facilities.

“No-one tells you where or what you can use the card for, like in the library; they should advertise.”

(Female, older person’s group)

“They don’t promote what you can use it for, you just hear about it through word of mouth...like the concession for swimming.”

(Female, older person’s group)

Summary

- 7.25 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.
- 7.26 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.
- 7.27 Whilst for older people saving money was very important, this led to further benefits in that as they did not have to worry about money they were more likely to make journeys to 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.
- 7.28 Importantly, the NEC scheme is perceived to be helping card holders either maintain or improve their physical health and, more significantly, their sense of wellbeing. Whilst this was the case of the majority of card holders overall, it was more likely to be the case for those with disabled or visually impaired cards. The card provides them with the ability to feel more independent and allows them to get out of the house in ways that they may not have in the absence of the card.

8. CONCLUSIONS

Use of the Card

- 8.1 The NEC was extensively used to travel for free bus travel. This was the primary use of the card in both year one and year two with over nine out of ten card holders using their card in this way. Within the focus groups it was identified that bus travel included not just local buses but intercity and national buses also. The card was also commonly used for train travel and identification purposes. Card holders in Shetland were also very likely to use their card for ferry travel.
- 8.2 There has been a notable increase in experience of problems when travelling by bus between year 1 and year 2, with an increase of 9% points (rising from 8% experiencing problems in 2013 to 17% in 2014). Issues with the Ticketing Machine on the bus being broken was the most commonly reported problem (rising from 5% in 2013 to 10% in 2014).
- 8.3 As was the case in 2013, there was very little evidence of misuse or abuse of the card. Very few respondents (2%) stated that they had more than one concessionary bus pass that they used for travel and just 15 respondents stated that they had ever given their card to someone else to use. Moreover, the perception of misuse, whilst identified by a very small proportion of respondents (2%), tended to be perceived as opposed to substantiated with examples of perception that the driver has printed the wrong destination on the ticket or that they had seen the driver refusing people for trying to use someone else's card.
- 8.4 Whilst the existence of Transport Scotland's hotline where misuse could be reported was positively perceived in the focus groups, awareness was relatively low in both the focus groups and the survey. Just 29% of survey respondents were aware that they could report misuse to Transport Scotland's hotline, a marginal increase from 26% in 2013.
- 8.5 Overall satisfaction with bus travel has remained very high across both survey years with over nine in ten respondents stating that they were satisfied with travelling on the bus generally.

Travel patterns using the card

- 8.6 The most common type of travelling respondents reported doing when using their card, as was the case in 2013, was shopping followed by leisure. These findings were supported by the focus groups.
- 8.7 The pattern of travel reported was broadly similar to that reported in 2013 where respondents reported using their card frequently with almost two thirds (65%) saying that they use their card at least once per week with almost half (44%) using their card 4 or more times per week. Also, the distance travelled when using the card varied by area with respondents living in urban areas most likely to travel shorter distances with almost half of those living in large

urban areas using their card to travel distances of under 5 miles. This is compared to respondents living in remote rural areas who usually use their card to travel distances of more than 25 miles.

- 8.8 A new series of questions were asked in 2014 in order to evaluate the extent to which additional journeys were made by card holders. Almost half of respondents (48%) said they now make journeys using their card that they would not previously have done, in particular day trips or visiting friends and relatives. Where respondents indicated that they would have made the journeys anyway, many are now using the bus as opposed to the car for these journeys.
- 8.9 This was supported by subsequent questions asked explicitly about changes to travel methods with over half of respondents stating that having the concessionary travel card has changed the method they use to travel with the vast majority (74%) stating that they now use the bus more and 41% using the car less.

Benefits and impact of the scheme

- 8.10 The most important benefit of the scheme was financial savings followed by providing card holders with independence/ freedom. These were also the most important aspects identified in 2013.
- 8.11 Disabled and visually impaired card holders were significantly more likely to state that independence was a key benefit of the NEC for them with younger respondents in the focus group supporting this stating that having the card gave them the opportunity to get out and about without relying on parents or carers.
- 8.12 Card holders with a 60+ card stated that the financial benefits were of most importance to them, in particular, allowing them to go out and not worry about money the way they would have otherwise done. These card holders stated that they were making additional journeys that they would not otherwise have made. In particular these journeys reduced their feeling of 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.
- 8.13 The NEC scheme is perceived to be helping more than half of card holders maintain or improve their physical health (51%) and sense of wellbeing (63%).
- 8.14 Physical health was improved due to the fact that respondents do more walking/ walk to the bus stop (46%) or simply getting out of the house/ out and about (44%). Mental wellbeing was more likely to be improved due to respondents getting out of the house (38%), socialising more (26%) and feeling independent (21%).

Satisfaction with the NEC Scheme

- 8.15 Satisfaction was extremely high with regards to the concessionary travel card scheme overall with almost all survey respondents (98%) being very or fairly satisfied. This was similarly high in 2013. This was reiterated in the focus groups where participants were in general highly satisfied with the card and all aspects of the scheme.

Appendices

Appendix One – Telephone survey questionnaire

Appendix Two – Focus group discussion guide

APPENDIX 1: TELEPHONE QUESTIONNAIRE



Project number	P621
Project name	Concessionary Travel Customer Survey

ID							
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	[Interviewer: Use sample details to confirm contact details. If incorrect please code as 'no' and write in correct details carefully]	Information same as sample?	
Respondent name		Yes	No
Record in capitals			
Address		Yes	No
Record in capitals			
Postcode		Yes	No
Record in capitals			
Telephone Number		Yes	No

[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 market research."

INTERVIEWER DECLARATION:

I declare that this interview was carried out according to instructions, within the Market Research Society's Code of Conduct, and that the respondent was not previously known to me.

Interviewer No:		Name:	
Questionnaire No		Signature:	
On quota:		Date:	
Edited by:		Duration	
Backchecked by:			

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 John Galilee 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
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[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	

Using the Card

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

Yes	1	Go to Q6
No	2	Go to Q5

5. If not, why not?

--

6. 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 Q7
No	2	Go to Q8 if use for bus travel. Go to Q24 if do not use for bus travel

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

Train travel	1	Go to Q8 if use card for bus travel Go to Q24 if do not use card for bus travel
Leisure services	2	
Swimming	3	
Library	4	
Ferry	5	
Identification	6	
Other (please specify)	7	

8. 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 Q9
Machine on the bus broken	2	Go to Q11
Card not working	3	Go to Q10
Any other problems (please specify)		Go to Q11

9. Can you explain what the problem was? [IN TERVERIEWER: 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 Q11 [IF ALSO EXPERIENCED CARD NOT WORKING GO TO Q10]
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10. 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 Q11
No	2	

11. Do you have more than one concessionary bus pass that you use for bus travel?

Yes	1	Go to Q12
No	2	Go to Q13

12. Can you tell me why you have more than one bus pass?

Other national card (England, Wales, N.Ireland)	1	Go to Q13
Has residence in more than 1 Scottish local authority	2	
Simply for convenience	3	
Had ordered new card then found old one	4	
Has Young Person's discount card as well as Disabled card	5	
Other (please specify)	6	

13. Have you ever given your card to anyone else to use? This survey is totally confidential and this question is being asked only to understand how frequently the card is used by others, not to identify specific individuals who are doing this or get anyone into trouble.

Yes	1	Go to Q14
No	2	

14. 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 Q15
No	2	

15. Are you aware that you can report abuse of the scheme to Transport Scotland's hotline? The hotline is free to call and is manned 24 hours a day on 0800 328 5690.

Yes	1	Go to Q16
No	2	

16. 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 Q17
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	

How and why the Card is used

17. 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 Q18
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	

18. Do you make any journeys now using your card that you would not make if you did not have your concessionary travel card?

Yes	1	Go to Q19
No	2	Go to Q20

19. Can you describe what sort of journeys you make that you would not make if you did not have your concessionary travel card?

	Go to Q20
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20. Thinking of the journeys you make using the card, which of the following statements best describes what you would have done if the concessionary travel scheme had not existed?

I would have made all of these journeys anyway	1	Go to Q21
I would have made most of these journeys anyway	2	
I would have made some of these journeys anyway	3	
I would have made very few of these journeys anyway	4	Go to Q22
I would have made none of these journeys anyway	5	

21. You said you would have [ALL/ MOST/ SOME] of these journeys anyway if you did not have your concessionary travel card. What method would you have used to make most of these journeys that you would have made anyway if you did not have your concessionary travel card? [ONE ONLY]

I would have made most of the journeys by bus	1	Go to Q22
I would have made most of the journeys by car	2	
I would have made most of the journeys on foot	3	
I would have made most of the journeys by some other method (please specify)	4	

22. What sort of distance do you normally travel when using your card for [TYPE OF TRAVEL USED MOST OFTEN AT Q16B]? SINGLE – READ OUT

Under 1 mile	1	Go to Q23
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	

23. 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 Q16B]? 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 Q24
Once per week	2	
2-3 per week	3	
4-7 per week	4	
More than 7 per week	5	

24. Are there any times of the year that you use your card more regularly than others? [ALL THAT APPLY]

Yes (please specify)	1	Go to Q25
No	2	
Don't know	3	

Benefits of the Scheme

25. 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 Q25
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	

26. 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 Q27
No	2	Go to Q28

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

I use the car less frequently	1	Go to Q28
I now use the bus more	2	
I now walk less than I used to	3	
I now walk more than I used to	4	
I now use the bus instead of the train	5	
Other (please specify)	6	

28. Do you feel that having a Concessionary Travel Card helps you maintain, or improve, a) your physical health and b) your sense of wellbeing?

A)PHYSICAL HEALTH		
Yes (can you explain how the Card helps your physical health?)	1	Go to Q28b
No	2	
B)SENSE OF WELLBEING		
Yes (can you explain how the Card helps your sense of wellbeing?)	1	Go to Q29
No	2	

Overall perceptions and value of the scheme

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

Very satisfied	1	Go to Q31
Fairly satisfied	2	
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3	
Fairly dissatisfied	4	Go to Q30
Very dissatisfied	5	
Don't know / Can't remember	6	Go to Q31

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

	Go to Q31
--	-----------

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

Very satisfied	1	Go to Q33
Fairly satisfied	2	
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3	
Fairly dissatisfied	4	Go to Q32
Very dissatisfied	5	
Can't remember	6	Go to Q33

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

	Go to Q33
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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.

33. [CODE FROM DATABASE] GENDER?

Male	1	Go to Q34
Female	2	

34. What age are you/ the card holder?

16 or under	1	Go to Q35
17-24	2	
25-44	3	
45-59	4	
60-64	5	
65-74	6	
75-84	7	
85 and over	8	

35. Do you/ your household have access to a car or van for private use?

Yes	1	Go to Q36
No	2	

36. What is your employment status?

Full time employment (more than 35 hrs pw)	1	Go to Q37
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	

37. 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 Q38
£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	

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

White Scottish	1	Go to Q39
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	

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

English	1	Go to Q40 If Card holder is under 16, go to Q42
Other (please specify)	2	

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

None	1	Go to Q41
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	

41. 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 Q42
Gay/ Lesbian	2	
Bisexual	3	
Other	4	
Prefer not to say	5	

42. 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 Year Two

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.

- Where do you use your card? (bus, ferry, etc)
- How frequently are you using the card? (daily, weekly, less often?)
- When are you travelling? Daytime? weekends? evenings?
- When using your card is it mostly for Social/Pleasure/Business?
- 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?
- Have you ever experienced any problems when using your card to access transport? (Probe fully – including photos on card, reader not working, issues with drivers?)

2. Administration and management (5 minutes)

- How did you find out about the Concessionary Travel Card scheme?
- Describe the process of getting your first NEC card? Any issues?

3. Misuse (15minutes)

- 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?
- What is the scale of the fraud? Is it widespread or isolated incidents?
- Does anyone have more than one NEC card? (Probe fully – why?)
- (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?)
- What do you think Transport Scotland do when misuse is reported?

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? (physical health, quality of life, financial savings, etc)
- Without this scheme, what would your circumstances be? (would you still be able to get out of the house/work, etc. Probe fully)
- Has having a NEC card changed the method of transport you use to travel?
- 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 Local Authorities 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.

Concessionary Travel Focus Group Discussion Guide Year Two Epilepsy Scotland

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. Administration and management (5 minutes)

- How did you find out about the Concessionary Travel Card scheme?
- Describe the process of getting your first NEC card? Any issues?

2. 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.

- Where do you use your card? (bus, ferry, etc)
- How frequently are you using the card? (daily, weekly, less often?)
- When are you travelling? Daytime? weekends? evenings?
- Does anyone travel with you when you're out? (mum/dad/support organisation?)
- 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?
- Have you ever experienced any problems when using your card to access transport? (Probe fully – including photos on card, reader not working, issues with drivers?)

Draw me a picture of you on the bus, using your card.

3. Misuse (15minutes)

- 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?
- What is the scale of the fraud? Is it widespread or isolated incidents?
- Does anyone have more than one NEC card? (Probe fully – why?)

- (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?)
 - What do you think Transport Scotland do when misuse is reported?
4. Value of the Concessionary Travel Card (25minutes)
- What are the benefits of using the card? What are the most important aspects for you?

Activity – draw or write on a post it the best thing about the concessionary travel card.

- What difference has the card made to you? (physical health, quality of life, financial savings, etc)
- Without this scheme, what would your circumstances be? (would you still be able to get out of the house/work, etc. Probe fully)
- Has having a NEC card changed the method of transport you use to travel?
- 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) –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 Local Authorities 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?

Activity – what score would you give the card scheme out of ten? Draw your number on a post it.

6 Thank and Close (5 minutes)

- Any other final comments from participants.

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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