

Title of meeting: Traffic and Transportation Decision Meeting

Date of meeting: 2 April 2020

Subject: Review of the disabled person's bus pass all day travel trial

Report by: Tristan Samuels - Director of Regeneration

Wards affected: All

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To review the trial of the unrestricted all day disabled person's bus pass and recommend its future.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for Traffic and Transportation approves that:

- 2.1 The free discretionary all day travel for disabled persons' bus passes is continued as a permanent addition of Portsmouth's English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS).**

3. Background

- 3.1 Portsmouth City Council operates two types of concessionary passes under the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme; the older persons' bus pass and the disabled persons' bus pass. The eligibility criteria for the disabled persons' bus pass is outlined in appendix C.
- 3.2 The older person's bus pass provides free travel during off-peak times (09:30am to 11pm, Monday to Friday), and all-day on weekends and public holidays. The bus pass doesn't cover travel in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland.
- 3.3 The Disabled persons' bus pass - At the Traffic & Transportation decision meeting on the 14th March 2019 an extension of the use of concessionary bus passes to allow disabled people to use the passes 24 hours a day from the previous off-peak offer was agreed for a 6 month trial.

- 3.2 The trial commenced on the 28th April 2019, this was then extended for a further six months until 31st March 2020 following a Traffic & Transportation decision meeting on 26th September 2019 to enable consultation and robust evaluation of the trial.
- 3.3 Prior to the 28th April 2019, Portsmouth City Council allowed Concessionary Travel from 09:30 to 23:00 Monday to Friday and any time at weekends & bank holidays, as per the statutory minimum requirements under the Concessionary Bus Travel Act 2007.
- 3.4 During the trial period, Portsmouth City Council has allowed Disabled Person's Concessionary bus pass to travel free all day Monday to Sunday and bank holidays on journeys starting within the Portsmouth City boundary.
- 3.5 This has enabled disabled people to use their bus pass to travel free all day to promote independence and social mobility, improving access to work and education, improving access to doctors and hospitals and improving further prospects of finding employment so contribute to the economic activity in the city. The aim of the trial is to also aid people that use day services to access purposeful activity in their day-to-day life.
- 3.6 At the time of writing this report Portsmouth City Council's Concessionary Fares scheme has 4415 disabled pass holders who are now entitled to all day travel under this trial. In addition to this, there are 156 disabled pass holders who are registered blind, and thus are already entitled to all day free travel using their disabled person's bus pass by statute.
- 3.7 From the introduction of the pilot on the 28th April 2019 until 20th February 2020, Portsmouth City Council has had 42 residents transfer from an older persons' bus pass to a disabled persons' bus pass. In the past there would have been little incentive for a resident to swap given both scheme's times of operation were identical. To date, there have been four first time applicants applying for a disabled person's bus pass when they were also eligible to apply for an older person's bus pass.
- 3.8 The eligibility criteria for an older person's disabled bus pass is listed in Appendix. C.

4 Disabled persons' survey

- 4.1 In January 2020 all disabled persons' bus pass holders within the city were sent the survey shown in Appendix A.
- 4.2 4415 surveys were sent out to disabled pass holders who are now entitled to all day travel of the 4415 surveys 621 were returned.

The key findings of the survey were:

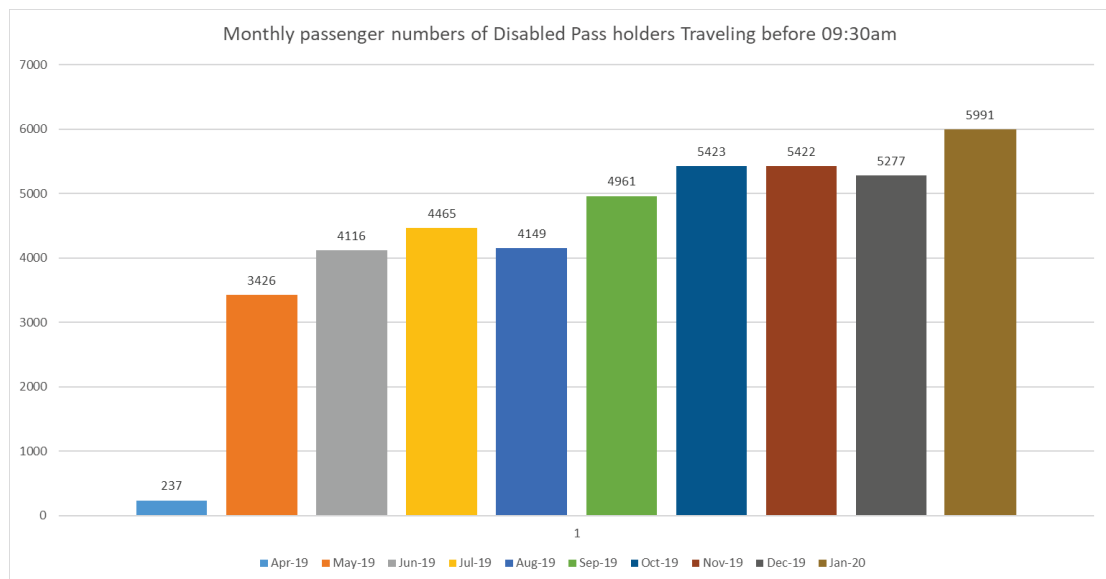
- 80% paid for travel before the trial was introduced.
- 80% have used the ability to travel before 09:30. 20% still have not used this facility.
- 68% of holders strongly agreed that the trial has improved their quality of life. 22% agreed while 5% strongly disagreed with 1% disagreeing.
- 27% use the ability to travel before 09:30 for leisure and entertainment while 11% use it for education and training with 20% using it to get to and from work. 59% chose other reasons. Of the 59%, 47.45% of respondents (233 people) to this questions used words such as "hospital", "appointment", "doctor", "health" and "medical" in their 'Other' (this have been noted in Appendix. B)
- 72% of holders accessed these activities before whereas this trial has encouraged 28% of passengers to access these activities before 09:30.

Full results are shown in Appendix B.

5 Patronage information

5.1 FIGURE 1 shows the number of trips disabled pass holders who have travelled for free within Portsmouth before 09:30am since the 28th of April 2019.

FIGURE 1



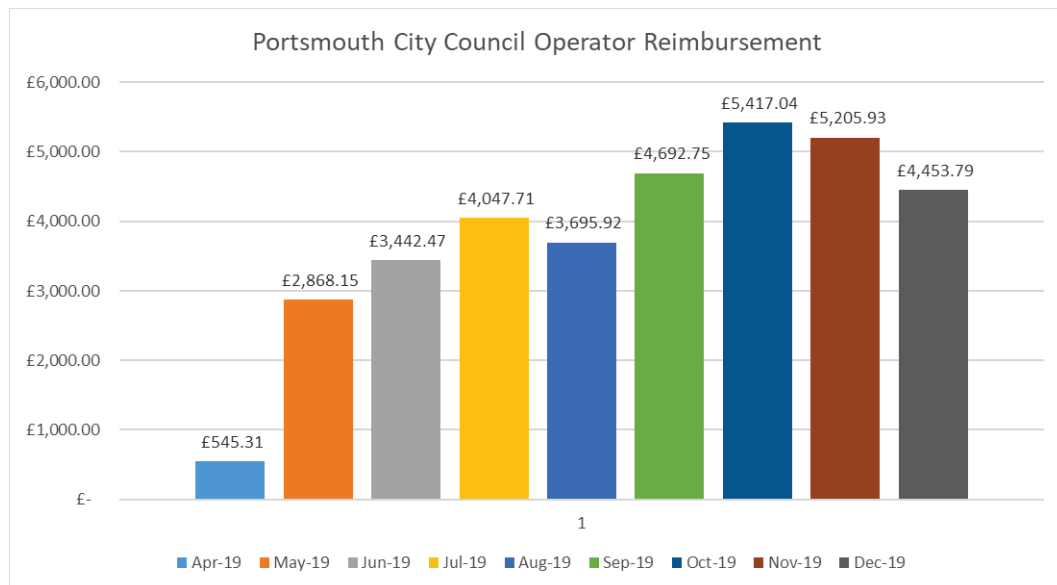
5.2 The chart above shows a steady increase in holders choosing to use the facility. This can be attributed to the allowance of travel before 09:30 meeting pass holder demands.

5.3 Since April 28th 2019 - 31st January 2020, 43,469 trips have been made by disabled pass holders. From the data available the regular trip average is 156 per day which is 3% of all disabled pass holders.

6. Concessionary reimbursement

6.1 Portsmouth City Council reimburses each operator for any disabled concession holder who travels before 09:30. Figure 2 below shows the monthly reimbursement.

Figure 2



6.2 From the data available it is estimated the full 12 month cost of the free discretionary all day travel trial will be £51,000.

7. Reasons for Recommendations

7.1 Following the introduction of the trial in April 2019 the scheme appears to be well received by the disabled persons' bus pass holders. This is indicated from the survey feedback and patronage information as detailed in Appendix. A. From information, 90% of holders who returned our survey indicated that they agreed that the trial had a positive effect on their quality of life. Since the trial was introduced there have been 43,469 trips. On average we are seeing 156 disabled pass holder trips before 09:30 throughout the city which equates to 3% of our disabled pass holders.

7.2 The survey information in **Section 4** of this report, shows that the introduction of the trial has had a positive effect on enabling disabled residents to access work, health, education and training before 09:30 while encouraging 28% to access activities they previously would not before 09:30.

- 7.3 The change to the City Council's concessionary pass scheme has resulted in a low additional cost to the Council's concessionary reimbursement. Financial costs stated in **Figure 2, Section 6** reflect the financial forecasts from the City Council before the trial.

8. Integrated Impact Assessment

- 8.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) and full equality impact assessment (EIA) have been completed.

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1 The extension of the disabled persons' bus travel concession for a trial period to operate all day is a discretionary enhancement to the mandatory statutory travel concessions which the City Council must provide under the Concessionary Bus Travel Act 2007, as amended. Accordingly the Council is able to decide whether or not to provide this enhancement using its own funding.
- 9.2 Any discretionary concessions extend only to the City Council's own administrative area unless a cross-border agreement has been reached with a neighbouring authority. At present, there is no cross-border agreement, nor has this been proposed.
- 9.3 In reaching a decision on this matter and subsequently in the context of undertaking the proposed review, the decision maker must have regard to the City Council's duty under section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010 (the public sector equality duty) and in particular to have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

10. Director of Finance comments

- 10.1 Despite the fact that more Concessionary pass holders are traveling before 9:30 there is currently no evidence to show that additional journeys are being created as a result of the expansion to the scheme. The level of Concessionary fare reimbursement by the Council to the operators does not appear to have increased, this may suggest that those pass holders travelling before 9:30 may have previously travelled later in the day.
- 10.2 The level of concessionary pass holder travel does not appear to be impacting on the Commercial Services run by the operators and they seem to be able to cope with the additional passengers from concessionary pass holders and their commercial passengers. This means that the operators are not losing out on full fare paying passengers as a result of the expansion of the scheme.

- 10.3 There is a risk that if the number of concessionary passengers choosing to travel before 9:30 increases to a level that it does effect the commercial travel the Council could see an increase in the number of journeys carried out and operators may choose to exercise the reimbursement mechanism increases as set out in the national guidance that see a premium paid on each concessionary fare reimbursement.
- 10.4 In the event that this happens the Council will need to consider how it operates the scheme going forward or find additional funding to pay for this, at the moment it appears that the risk of this is low as it only applies to Disabled pass holders.

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Signed by:
Tristan Samuels
Director of Regeneration

Appendices:

Appendix A - Disabled Pass Survey
Appendix B - Full survey results
Appendix C - Criteria for a Disabled Persons Bus Pass

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

.....
Signed by:
Councillor Lynne Stagg
Cabinet Member for Traffic & Transportation

Appendix A - Disabled pass survey



Disabled Pass Survey

Portsmouth City Council would like your feedback following the introduction of free travel before 9.30am for disabled pass holders. This is currently running on a trial basis and ends on 31 March 2020. Your feedback will help shape the future of this provision.

The survey is for all users or potential users of the disabled person's bus pass. The survey will take less than five minutes to complete.

All data collected will be made anonymous and not shared with anyone outside Portsmouth City Council. We will store your data in line with the council's Data Protection privacy notice.

1. **Thinking about before the free bus travel was introduced, how often did you pay to use the bus before 9.30am?**
 - ☐ Daily
 - ☐ Weekly
 - ☐ Monthly
 - ☐ Less often
 - ☐ Never
2. **How often do you travel before 9.30am for free?**
 - ☐ Daily - continue to Q3
 - ☐ Weekly - continue to Q3
 - ☐ Monthly - continue to Q3
 - ☐ Less often - continue to Q3
 - ☐ Never - continue to Q3
3. **To what extent do you agree or disagree that the all-day free bus travel has improved your quality of life?**
 - ☐ Strongly agree
 - ☐ Agree
 - ☐ Neither agree no disagree
 - ☐ Disagree
 - ☐ Strongly disagree
4. **What is the reason for your travel before 09:30?**
 - ☐ For education/training
 - ☐ To and from work
 - ☐ Leisure and entertainment
 - ☐ Day services
 - ☐ Other (please specify)
5. **Did you access these activities before?**
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No

Please turn over

About you

6. What is your postcode? (This information will only be used for research purposes).

7. What is your sex?

- ☐ Male
☐ Female
☐ Prefer to self describe (please specify)

- ☐ Prefer not to say

8. What is your age group?

- ☐ 16-25
☐ 26-35
☐ 36-45
☐ 46-55
☐ 56-65
☐ 65+
☐ Prefer not to say

9. What type of disability do you have?

- ☐ Physical
☐ Mobility
☐ Visual Impairment
☐ Hearing
☐ Learning disability
☐ Mental health
☐ Other
☐ Prefer not to say

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. This information will help inform our review of the trial of the free concessionary bus pass for disabled users.

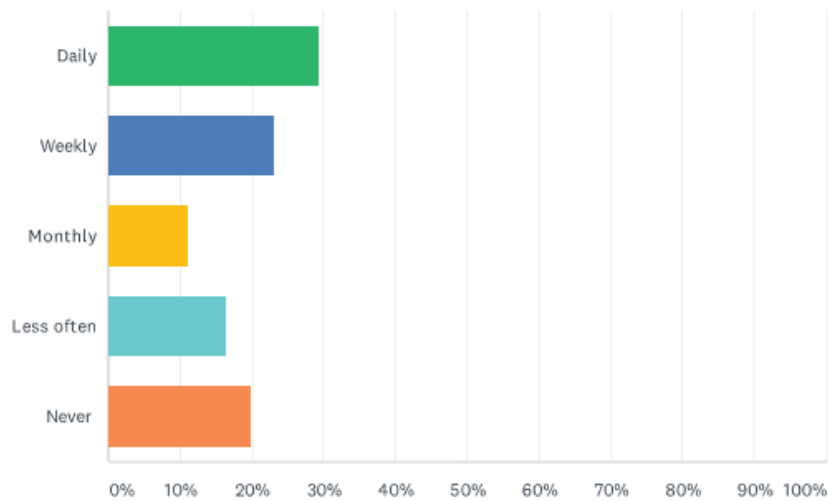
If you have any questions or further comments, please email them to transport@portsmouthcc.gov.uk.

Please return all surveys by 1st of March 2020 so that they can be included in the service provision review.

Appendix B - Full survey results

Q1 Thinking about before the free bus travel was introduced, how often did you pay to use the bus before 9.30am?

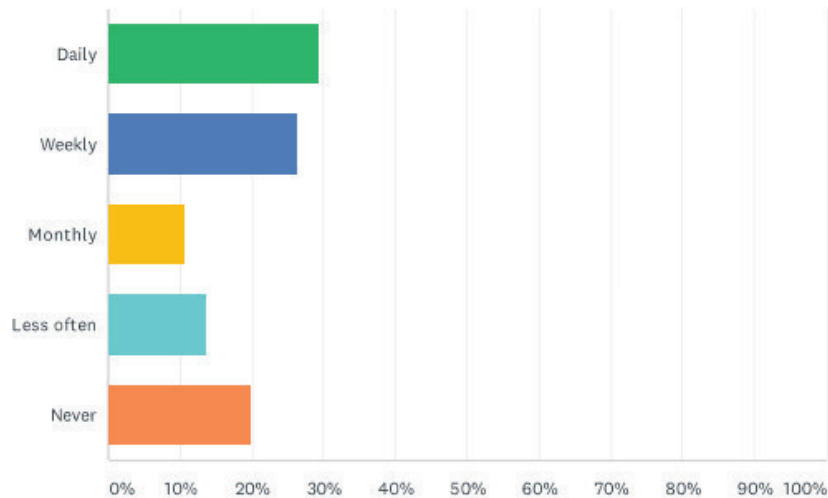
Answered: 627 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Daily	29.35%	184
Weekly	23.13%	145
Monthly	11.16%	70
Less often	16.43%	103
Never	19.94%	125
TOTAL		627

Q2 How often do you travel before 9.30am for free?

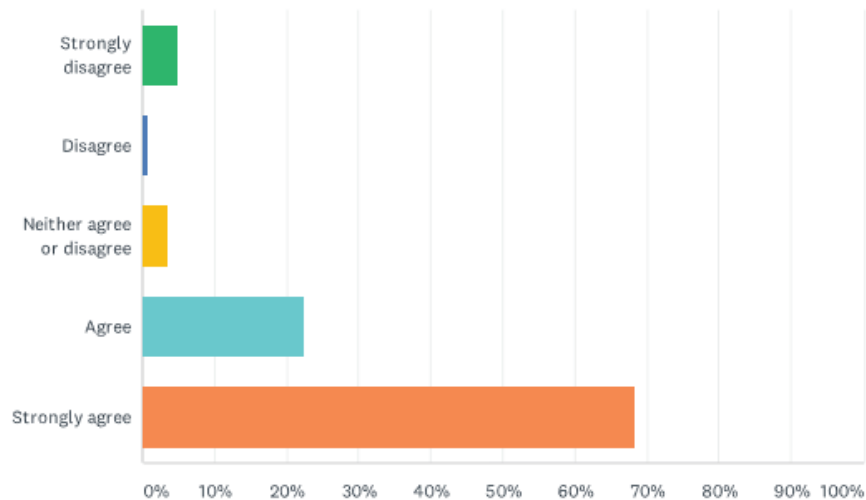
Answered: 623 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Daily		29.37%	183
Weekly		26.32%	164
Monthly		10.75%	67
Less often		13.64%	85
Never		19.90%	124
TOTAL			623

Q3 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the all-day free bus travel has improved your quality of life?

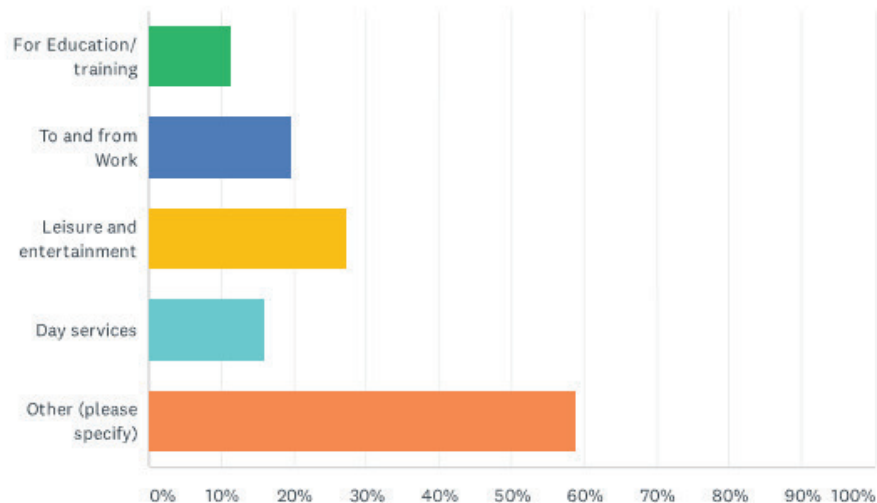
Answered: 497 Skipped: 130



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly disagree	4.83%	24
Disagree	0.80%	4
Neither agree or disagree	3.62%	18
Agree	22.33%	111
Strongly agree	68.41%	340
TOTAL		497

Q4 What is the reason for your travel before 09:30?

Answered: 491 Skipped: 136



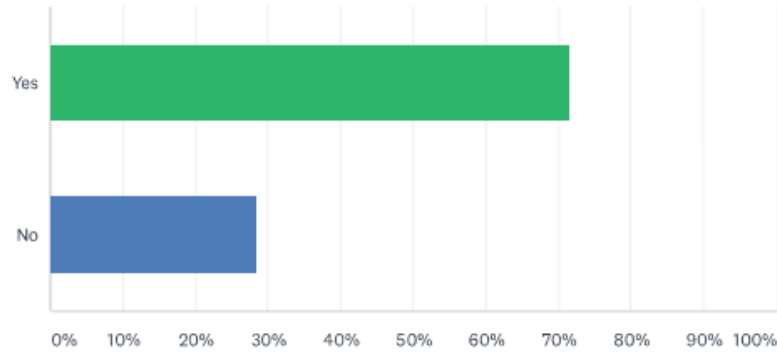
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
For Education/ training	11.20%	55
To and from Work	19.76%	97
Leisure and entertainment	27.49%	135
Day services	16.09%	79
Other (please specify)	58.86%	289
Total Respondents: 491		

Note:

47.45% of respondents (233 people) to this questions used words such as "hospital", "appointment", "doctor", "health" and "medical" in their 'Other' specified response.

Q5 Did you access these activities before?

Answered: 481 Skipped: 146



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	71.52%	344
No	28.48%	137
TOTAL		481

Q6 What is your postcode? (This information will only be used for research purposes).

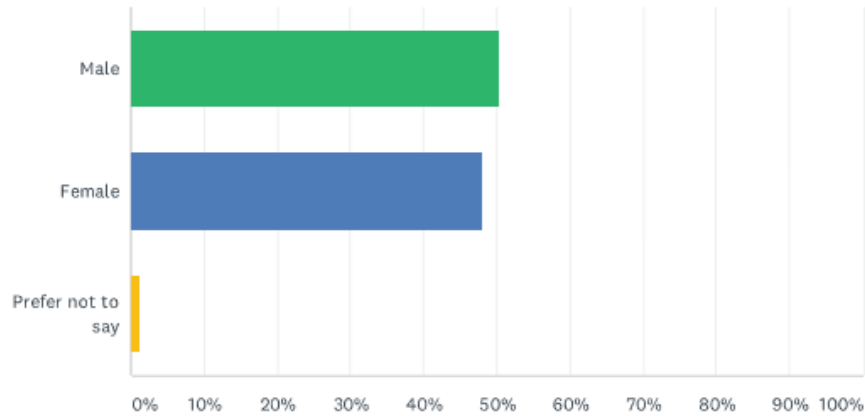
Answered: 581 Skipped: 46

Note:

PO1	92	15.83%
PO2	130	22.37%
PO3	44	7.57%
PO4	103	17.72%
PO5	90	15.49%
PO6	118	20.30%
Other:	4	0.98%
Skipped:	46	

Q7 What is your sex?

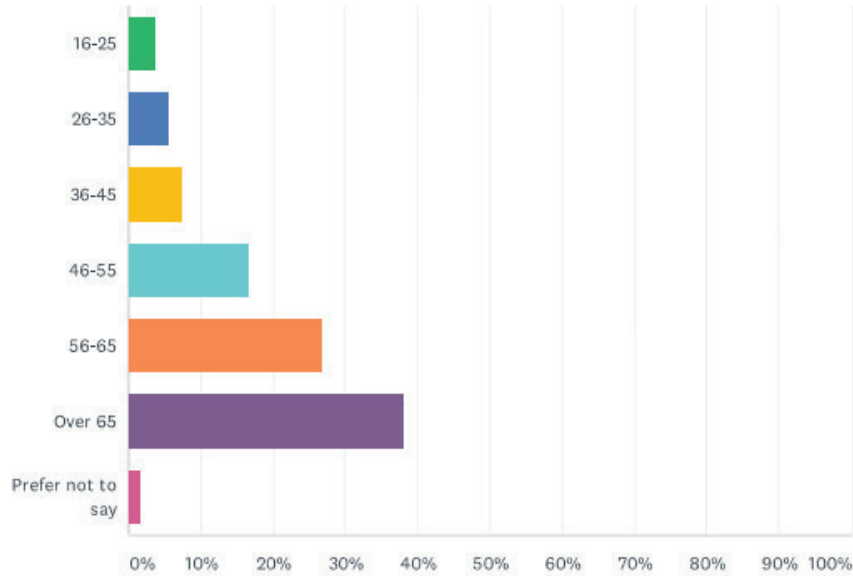
Answered: 608 Skipped: 19



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Male	50.49%	307
Female	48.19%	293
Prefer not to say	1.32%	8
TOTAL		608

Q8 What is your age group?

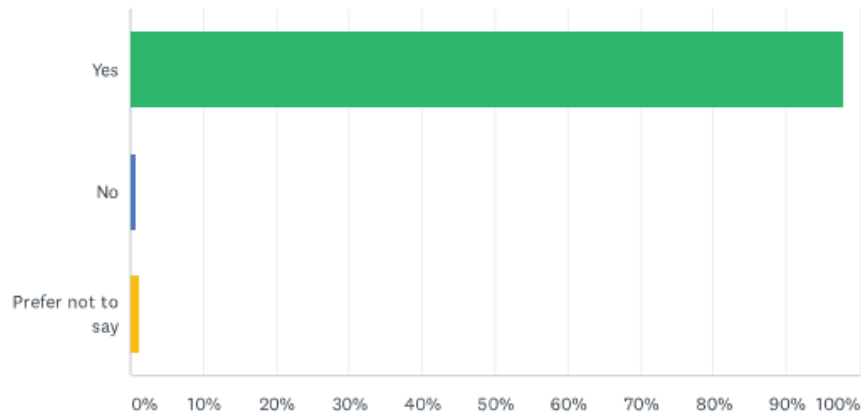
Answered: 605 Skipped: 22



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
16-25	3.80%	23
26-35	5.62%	34
36-45	7.44%	45
46-55	16.69%	101
56-65	26.78%	162
Over 65	38.02%	230
Prefer not to say	1.65%	10
TOTAL		605

Q9 Do you consider yourself to have a disability under the 2010 Equality Act?

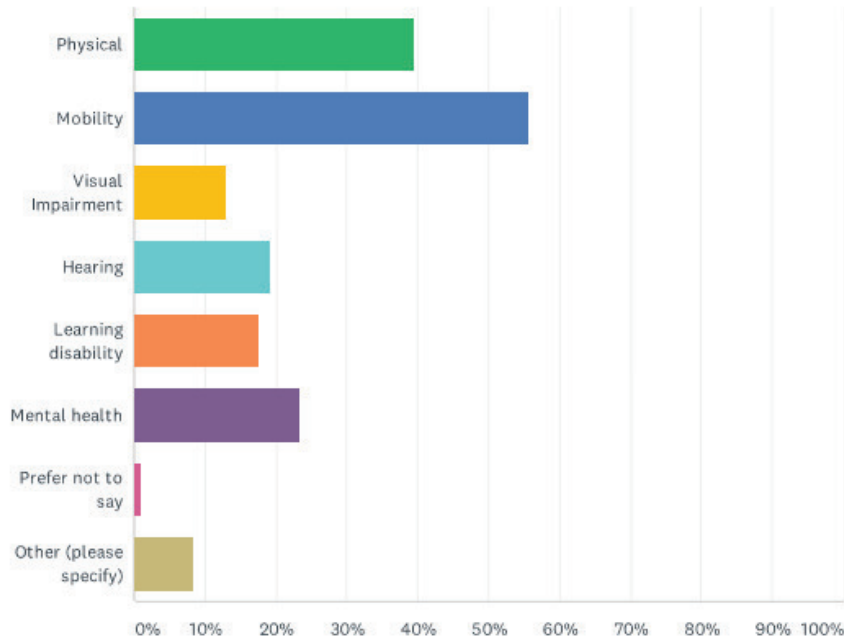
Answered: 613 Skipped: 14



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	97.88%	600
No	0.82%	5
Prefer not to say	1.31%	8
TOTAL		613

Q10 What type of disability do you have?

Answered: 597 Skipped: 30



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Physical	39.53%	236
Mobility	55.61%	332
Visual Impairment	12.90%	77
Hearing	19.26%	115
Learning disability	17.59%	105
Mental health	23.45%	140
Prefer not to say	1.01%	6
Other (please specify)	8.38%	50
Total Respondents: 597		

Notes:

'Other' specified responses include 28 stating "N/A", and 22 are considered to be medical conditions including epilepsy and autism.

Appendix C - Criteria for a Disabled Persons Bus Pass

- Blind or partially sighted
- Profoundly or severely deaf, without speech
- Have a disability, or have suffered an injury, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on your ability to walk
- Have long term loss of the use of both arms or do not have arms
- Have a learning disability - a state of arrested or incomplete development of mind which includes significant impairment of intelligence and social functioning
- Would have an application to drive a motor vehicle refused due to your disability
- A member or veteran of the Armed Services who has been seriously injured in service