

Concessionary fares consultation summary document.

## **October 2010**

This document summarises the processes and findings of the Concessionary Fares public consultation exercise held by Hampshire County Council in 2010.

In March 2010 the Government finalised proposals to transfer the administration of the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme from District Councils to County Councils with effect from April 2011.

As part of preparation for this transfer Hampshire County Council held a public consultation exercise on the subject in order to inform decisions about the future level and administration of the scheme to be implemented from 1 April 2011. This consultation took place between 12 July and 8 October 2010

Against a backdrop of uncertain policy and funding frameworks owing to the formation of a new government and the wider economic situation, the consultation form produced sought the views of residents, groups and organisations across Hampshire on the following:

1. Comments if the statutory English National Concessionary Travel Scheme only were to be provided - free local bus travel between 09:30 and 23:00 (all times weekends & bank holidays) to people of eligible retirement age and eligible people with disabilities over 5 years of age
2. If sufficient funding were available what priorities should be considered as additional discretionary enhancements should your travel requirements not be met with a bus pass allowing free travel between 0930 and 2300 and at any time at weekends?
3. What is the best way to issue passes in the future?
4. What are your current travel habits?
5. What is your background?

This form was made available in hard copy and via Hantsweb and approximately 5,000 hard copies were issued during the course of the consultation. The number of forms downloaded from Hantsweb, however, is unknown.

9 specially convened Passenger Transport Forums were convened across the county which were attended by approximately 350 people representing district, borough and parish councils, transport operators, care groups, disability groups, residents associations, pensioners associations and many others. Many more were invited and A full list of organisations invited to the Forums can be provided on request.

In addition to the Passenger Transport Forums, various other representative groups were consulted including the Learning Disabilities Board, The Older Peoples Wellbeing Transport Group, District Council liaison group, Link Network, Personalisation Expert Panel, Community Involvement Teams, as well as most relevant groups within the Adult and Childrens Services departments.

Lastly, direct mailings to 1,100 existing concessionary travel users were made to ensure representation from those most likely to be directly affected by any changes to the scheme.

A series of Press Releases were issued during the consultation period across the county alerting residents to the consultation process and urging responses.

### **Analysis of responses**

As a result more than 1,600 completed forms were eventually returned to the County Council. The total number of people expressing a view is higher than 1,600 as many of the returned forms were on behalf of groups, organisations and councils as represented below:

Parish/Town Councils	28
Voluntary Groups	27
Pensioner groups	6
Voluntary Transport Groups	5
District Councils	11
Residents Associations	3
Transport User Groups	3
Adult Services Hampshire County Council	2
Access Group	1
Camra	1
College	1
Housing Association	1
National Park	1
Training Project	1

A full list of these groups and those invited to respond is available on request.

### **Post Codes**

The highest number of responses came from the following post codes:

BH25	New Milton	20
GU11	Aldershot	11
GU14	Farnborough	30
GU34	Alton	63
GU35	Bordon	13
GU46	Yateley	12

PO10	Emsworth	11
PO12	Gosport	68
PO14	Fareham West	18
PO15	Locks Heath	19
PO16	Fareham East	25
PO7	Denmead	43
PO8	Clanfield	27
PO9	Rowlands Castle	44
RG20	Tadley	11
RG21	Basingstoke	38
RG22	West Basingstoke	60
RG23	Oakley	13
RG24	Popley/Chineham	24
RG25	South Basingstoke	56
RG26	North Basingstoke	51
RG27	Hartley Wintney	12
RG28	Whitchurch	12
SO21	North Winchester	38
SO22	West Winchester	69
SO23	Winchester	65
SO24	Alresford	18
SO30	Hedge End	30
SO31	Hamble	73
SO32	Bishops Waltham	58
SO40	Totton	31
SO41	Lymington	53
SO42	Brockenhurst	11
SO45	Waterside	54
SO50	Eastleigh	32
SO51	Romsey	41
SO53	Chandlers Ford	16
SP10	Andover	46
SP11	North Andover	31

Areas with less than 10 respondents have been omitted for reporting clarity.

In analysing these returns the following statistical data was determined:

Gender	44% Male 56% female
People with disabilities	335
Ethnicity	98.5% White 1.5% other
Average age of respondent	69

In answering the **funding priority** questions the top 3 priority responses were:

### Priority 1

Travel before 0930	600
Tokens	367
Keep existing bus passes	176
Provide concessions on rail	69
Provide concessions on Community Transport	22
Companion passes	21
Provide concessions on Ferries	19
Charge a fee/means test	17
Provide concessions on taxis	12
Travel after 2300	7

### Priority 2

Travel before 0930	127
Tokens	99
Provide concessions on rail	79
Provide concessions on Ferries	55
Provide concessions on Community Transport	31
Charge a fee/Means test	28
Provide concessions on taxis	26
Companion passes	22
Keep existing bus pass	14

### Priority 3

Travel before 0930	40
Provide concessions on rail	30
Tokens	29
Companion passes	16
Extension to taxis	15
Provide concessions on Ferries	13
Provide concessions on Community Transport	8
Keep existing bus passes	7
Charge a fee/means test	7

There were numerous individual comments, which did not fit neatly into these categories

Referring to **application methods** the top priorities were:

Keep as existing	473
Council Offices	331
By post	326
On line	124
Through post offices	50
Automatic renewals	20
Libraries	17

By telephone	17
Locally (unspecified)	15
Community/village halls	14
At Bus Stations	5
Provide bus passes for life	4

### **Next steps**

Having received these responses the decision over the type and level of concession to be offered from 1 April 2011 will be decided by the Executive Member for Transport at 1000 on 19 November 2010 in the Mitchell Room of Queen Elizabeth Court, Winchester. A public information and communications plan is being developed which will be followed once a decision is available.