

Cragg Ross Dawson

IDENTITY CARDS

THE PUBLIC'S RESPONSE TO PROPOSED CUSTOMER PROPOSITIONS

REPORT

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Contacts at Cragg Ross Dawson:
Catherine Taylor and Tim Porter

Cragg Ross Dawson
Qualitative Research
18 Carlisle Street
London W1D 3BX

Tel +44 (0)20 7437 8945

Fax +44 (0)20 7437 0059

research@crd.co.uk

www.craggrossdawson.co.uk

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A. MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

Background and purpose

Qualitative research was commissioned by COI Communications on behalf of the Home Office ID Cards Programme to explore perceptions of the benefits of an ID card scheme and how the cards might be used in daily life. The purpose of this research was to understand better which potential uses of the scheme would have most benefit to citizens, in order to inform the design of the requirements for the scheme.

Stimulus material was prepared to aid discussion. A core proposition summarised the benefits of ID cards for society and for the individual. Seven situation propositions outlined how ID cards might be used in various contexts. Further details can be found on page 5 of this report, but in summary the situation propositions covered:

- travel
- access to financial services
- access to core public services
- access to non-core public and private services
- purchase of age restricted products
- identity fraud and crime
- safety in society

Six additional propositions described groups of people who might be encouraged to apply for a card at a reduced cost. The purpose was to explore the extent to which respondents thought it would be relevant for these groups to take up an ID Card. These propositions were:

- young people turning 16
- recipients of state benefits
- the police
- Armed Forces and Ministry of Defence personnel
- people applying for jobs in positions of trust

- prisoners and those serving community sentences

Sample and method

The sample comprised 17 group discussions with members of the public. There was a spread of ages from 16 to 75, a mix of men and women, and a split between social groups ABC1 and C2DE. Each group reflected one of the situation propositions in terms of attitudes and experiences. Two of the seventeen groups were with benefit recipients. Fieldwork was conducted in October and November 2004.

Conclusions

There was broad support for ID cards in principle in this research. There are some misunderstandings about aspects of the proposed scheme, particularly compulsion, security and range of information gathered. Providing reassurance on these issues will be helpful in meeting potential concerns. The research did not explore perceptions of the cost of ID cards; when it did come up it tended to cause concern.

The situation propositions that work best are those that: stay close to how respondents imagine ID cards will be used; give practical examples; address current concerns; tackle issues where establishing identity is the root of the problem; and use ID cards proactively to prevent crime or abuse of services. The most resonant propositions are those in the area of identity fraud, health tourism, and certain aspects of safety. Respondents are more motivated by society benefits, but, where plausible individual benefits can be found, these help to increase respondents' appreciation of what the scheme can deliver.

Individual take-up propositions are well-received. Taken together, however, they can make the scheme seem piecemeal and renew calls for ID cards to be compulsory from the start.

Contextual points

There was high awareness of a proposal to introduce ID cards, but uncertainty about when this might take place. Knowledge was often inaccurate and the view that carrying the card will be compulsory (with penalties for not doing so) was widespread.

The predominant rationale for an ID card system was perceived to be the benefit to society: prevention of illegal activities, including terrorism, fraud and immigration. ID cards were expected to be most effective in tackling benefit fraud and illegal immigration; as such they were associated with exclusion. Perceived benefits to the individual were generally less tangible.

It was widely accepted that the government was the only possible and appropriate author of an identity card scheme. Nevertheless, the fact of government involvement prompted concerns, objections and sometimes hostility to the scheme in principle from a minority of respondents.

Response to the core proposition

Aspects of the core proposition were plausible and motivating, but respondents were clear in their view that ID Cards would not be a panacea for any of the suggested areas of benefit. The society benefits were the more compelling: they fitted with expectations that ID cards would be more beneficial in identifying people who were *not* entitled to particular services or benefits than as a means of ensuring that people who were entitled to services received them. Illegal immigration and health tourism were the most motivating issues. The individual benefits were unexpected: they ran counter to perceptions that ID cards are all about protecting the country as a whole, and were less resonant as a result.

Response to the situation propositions

Financial services and Identity fraud were the most motivating situation propositions. Identity fraud was a concern at both a society and an individual level, and securing financial transactions was a plausible benefit of ID cards. Increasing the speed and efficiency of financial transactions was also appealing. Respondents envisaged biometric verification when opening accounts and making high level transactions, and a lower level of verification day-to-day.

Responses to the Core public services proposition were mixed. Reducing health tourism was a motivating society benefit, but individual ease of access to health services was not a current concern. Safety

within the public service environment was a significant worry for some, but the role for ID cards was not clear.

Using ID cards in the purchase of Age-restricted products was acceptable, but was not a powerful motivation. Although the cards could help to prevent illegal sales, much would depend on policing.

Responses to the Safety in society proposition were mixed. ID cards were expected to reduce the use of false identities but not violent and neighbourhood crime. The proposition increased civil liberties concerns and implied that the cards would hold detailed information.

Biometric verification was welcomed in the Travel context, but respondents found it difficult to articulate specific benefits. Improvements to the individual travel experience were thought plausible but limited. The risk of terrorism was regarded as somewhat remote, and the role of ID cards in combating terrorism was not clearly understood. General safety in the travel context was not a pressing concern.

Easier access to Non-core public and private services was not a strong motivation. ID cards would be convenient if they replaced other cards, but there were concerns about data-sharing. A minority of respondents believed that the card could act as a badge of legitimacy, but most were sceptical that the card would reduce racial tension and resentment towards immigrants.

Response to the take-up propositions

Individually, some of the take-up propositions had strong appeal. Low-cost cards for 16 year olds and encouraged take-up for people working in positions of trust and benefit recipients were well received. Many wanted cards to be compulsory and free for these groups. The rationale for encouraging the police and the Armed Forces to have cards was less clear. Cards for prisoners were instinctively welcomed, but there were strong concerns about persecution and injustice.

Taken together, the take-up propositions prompted concerns about the targeting of specific groups and tended to renew calls for ID cards to be compulsory for everyone as soon as possible.

B. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The Home Office is currently developing proposals for the introduction of an Identity Cards (ID cards) scheme in the UK. One part of this process is to consider what the benefits of ID cards might be, both for the individual and for society as a whole; the types of situation in which ID cards would be most useful; and equally where they are not seen as relevant.

Qualitative research was commissioned to explore public perceptions of these issues. The main objectives of the study were to:

- gauge respondents' unprompted opinions of the potential uses and benefits of ID cards
- explore responses to a series of propositions about the types of situation in which ID cards might be used

The Home Office defined a wide spectrum of situations where an ID Card may be used (some more, some less likely to be put into practice). These situations were developed into seven 'situation propositions', each outlining the potential use and benefits of ID cards in a particular circumstance. Each proposition was broken down into two or three specific situations. The following is a summary of the situations covered:

Situation 1: When travelling overseas

Fast track traveller: 'The ID Card provides me with a faster and more convenient route through airports and ports.'

Doing my bit: 'The ID Card makes me feel more secure and allows me to 'do my bit' in the fight against terrorism at airports and ports.'

Situation 2: When accessing financial services

My money and me: 'The ID Card allows me to get to my money in a simpler and more secure way whilst being reassured that no one else can.'

Not in my name: 'The ID Card allows me to make a personal contribution to preventing financial fraud.'

Situation 3: When accessing core public services

Protecting my right to public services: 'The ID Card is an easier way to prove my right to essential public services such as the NHS and the education system.'

Preventing abuse of our public services: 'The ID Card ensures that people who do not have the right to free public services have to pay for them.'

Creating a safer environment: 'The ID Card helps to make hospitals a safer place to be.'

Situation 4: When accessing other private and public sector services

Rapid access: 'An easier way of proving my identity when accessing private and public sector services (such as libraries, the Post Office and sports facilities).'

I belong: 'The ID Card acts as a 'badge' which shows my right to residency in the UK and allows me to prove my identity when accessing public and private services.'

Situation 5: When purchasing age restricted products

Now I'm old enough: 'The ID Card enables me to prove my age in order to buy products such as cigarettes, alcohol and lottery tickets.'

Caring for today's youth: 'I feel I've done what I can to prevent under-age people from buying products such as cigarettes, alcohol and lottery tickets.'

Situation 6: When being concerned about ID fraud or crime

Take charge: 'By using my ID Card to prove who I am when making large transactions / making credit card purchases, I am helping prevent identity fraud and may help to expose those who attempt it.'

Every penny counts: 'By using my ID Card I am saving money as well as helping to prevent identity fraud.'

Situation 7: When being concerned about safety in our society

The common key: 'The ID Card Scheme makes it easier for the police to make our society safer.'

The good citizen: 'By getting an ID Card I am able to make a personal contribution to improving safety in our society.'

Respondents were also shown a 'core proposition' summarising the potential society and individual benefits of the identity card scheme as a whole.

The specific objectives of the research were as follows:

- to gauge the perceived importance and relevance of each situation proposition
- to explore respondents' views of the potential benefits to the individual and to society of using ID cards in this situation
- to explore in detail how ID cards might work in practice in each scenario, including the boundaries of acceptable and unacceptable usage
- to highlight any concerns about potential changes to the current process
- to gauge the effect of each situation on perceptions of the ID cards scheme as a whole

The research was also intended to explore respondents' views of which groups within society (if any) should be considered a priority for the ID cards scheme. Six 'take-up propositions' were developed, each outlining proposals for a specific group of people to be encouraged to register for an ID card, possibly at a reduced cost. These six groups were as follows:

- young people turning 16
- recipients of state benefits
- the police

- Armed Forces and Ministry of Defence personnel
- people applying for jobs in positions of trust
- prisoners and those serving community sentences

C. METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLE

The research comprised 17 group discussions with members of the public. There were 7 or 8 respondents in each group, and the discussions lasted for approximately ninety minutes.

Groups 1-15 represented a broad general public sample. This covered a range of ages (16-75) and social classes (ABC1, C2DE), and represented men and women in approximately equal numbers. These groups were also designed to reflect the seven situation propositions: in each group, respondents shared particular circumstances and/or attitudes relevant to one of the propositions. During the discussions, respondents were invited to focus their attention on the proposition most relevant to them, although each group also discussed at least one other proposition as well. The recruitment criteria were as follows:

- **users of 'core' public services** were people who used a GP regularly or had had recent hospital treatment, and who had children in the state education system
- **users of other public and private services** were people who had recently used services such as the Post Office, Inland Revenue and Local Authority
- **users of financial services** were people who had recently opened a bank account or taken out another financial product such as a mortgage
- **purchasers of age restricted products** were young people, and parents of young people, who regularly bought products such as alcohol, tobacco and lottery tickets
- **regular travellers/holiday makers** were people who regularly travelled abroad on holiday or on business
- **people who have been exposed to crime** were individuals who had recently been the victim of a crime, including some victims of identity crime

- **people concerned about safety in general** were those who expressed particular worries about terrorism and/or organised crime, and personal safety

Groups 16 and 17 comprised respondents who were currently receiving a state benefit (a mix of Job Seeker's Allowance, Income Support and disability benefits).

The research sample was structured as follows:

- G1: C2DE 31-45 core public service users London/SE
- G2: BC1 46-60 victims of crime London/SE
- G3: C2DE 61-75 concerned about safety Midlands
- G4: BC1 16-20 purchasers of age restricted products Midlands rural
- G5: BC1 31-45 concerned about safety S West rural
- G6: C2DE 61-75 other public and private service users S West rural
- G7: C2DE 21-30 financial service users South Wales
- G8: BC1 31-45 regular travellers/holiday makers South Wales
- G9: C2DE 21-30 other public and private service users North rural
- G10: BC1 46-60 core public service users North
- G11: BC1 21-30 victims of crime North
- G12: C2DE 46-60 purchasers of age restricted products Scotland
- G13: BC1 61-75 financial service users Scotland
- G14: BC1 46-60 regular travellers/holiday makers N Ireland
- G15: C2DE 16-20 concerned about safety N Ireland

- G16: recipients of benefits, 21-40, London/SE
- G17: recipients of benefits, 41-60, North

The discussions adhered to the following approximate structure:

- awareness and unprompted views of ID cards
- response to one-page summary of the proposed scheme
- response to the core proposition
- response to the situation propositions
- response to the take-up propositions

The fieldwork was conducted between 27th October and 11th November 2004 by Rob Hartley, Africa Munyama, Tim Porter, Catherine Taylor and Ben Toombs.

D. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Overall response to ID cards**

Support for the principle of ID cards in this research was strong: most of this sample felt it would be a good idea both before and after discussing the proposed customer propositions.

Support tends to be more emotional than rational: people worry about threats to the country's security, want to feel something can be done about it, and see ID cards as a helpful measure. The prospect of an 'official', publicly-held record of individuals' identities is seen as a powerful tool in efforts to counter a range of illegal activities.

Nevertheless respondents rarely thought through the practicalities of such a system with any care, and little attention was given to how ID cards might deal with these threats on a day-to-day basis.

The safety and security of the scheme is a concern. Much of this concern centres around perceptions that the ID card itself will be the main element of the scheme, although there are also concerns about the security of the Identity Register. It will be important to reassure the public that the card in itself is not all-important and that losing it or having it stolen would not have serious consequences; and to develop a better understanding of the interplay between the card, Identity Register Number and biometric information.

There is a strong belief that the scheme will have to be compulsory to own and compulsory to use in some circumstances in order to work effectively.

Understanding of the different levels of verification widens the perceived scope and flexibility of the scheme, but requires careful explanation.

2. **The situation propositions**

At this stage, there is relatively low public understanding of the details of how the ID card system will work and the potential for the cards or biometric information to be used in a wide range of circumstances. Many of the situation propositions consequently came as a surprise to

respondents, and their reactions reflect this: their default reaction is often to question the potential of ID cards to achieve the desired benefits.

The propositions that respondents understand best are those that stay relatively close to how people imagine ID cards will be used. Propositions that suggest using ID cards in unexpected ways and require a leap of imagination tend to be dismissed.

Similarly, the most convincing propositions are those that give tangible, practical examples of how ID cards will be used to achieve the benefits suggested. Where these practical examples are not provided, or cannot easily be deduced, the benefits tend to seem idealistic and this can undermine the perceived efficacy of the scheme as a whole.

Propositions which address current, top-of-mind concerns are most resonant. Respondents see less benefit in using ID Cards in areas where they do not currently perceive there to be a problem.

As a general rule, the strongest propositions are those where *securely establishing identity* is quite clearly the key to addressing the problem, since this is what ID cards can most plausibly achieve. For example, fraudulent access to health services, benefit fraud, identity fraud and, to a slightly lesser extent, Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks, all fall into this category.

Another important factor is the difference between proactive and retrospective use of the cards. Although there is some merit in using ID cards to solve crimes or catch offenders, it is much more impressive if they can be used to *prevent* crimes or abuse of services.

The propositions that work less well tend to fall in two categories. The first are those which suggest a plausible use for ID cards, but not in an area which people regard as an immediate concern. For example, respondents understand that ID cards could be used to access non-core services; but because they do not perceive a problem with the way services are accessed at the moment, this is not a resonant benefit.

The second group comprises propositions where there is a serious problem to be addressed, but where respondents do not believe that ID

cards can solve it. Often this is because establishing identity is not thought to be the main cause of the problem. For example, there is a concern about anti-social behaviour in hospitals, but respondents do not believe that perpetrators would act differently if their identity was confirmed by an ID card.

This latter example illustrates another general rule: that respondents are particularly sceptical about the ability of ID cards to protect against problems in the physical environment such as terrorism or neighbourhood crime.

Propositions that appeal to respondents' desire to 'do their bit' are also weak. At a rational level, respondents understand that they would have to have an ID card in order to make the system work, even if the cards are really aimed at restricting the activities of 'others', not themselves. There may also be some emotional value in the concept of improving society by participating in the scheme. However, there is a risk that any such a message would appear clichéd and condescending.

Of the situation propositions tested, the following had the greatest resonance with respondents:

- using ID cards in financial transactions in order to reduce identity fraud (combining aspects of the **Financial services** and **Identity fraud** propositions)
- certain aspects of the **Core public services** proposition, namely the role of ID cards in ensuring that people not entitled to free non-emergency NHS treatment pay for their treatment
- certain aspects of the **Safety** proposition, particularly using ID cards to improve CRB checks

Currently, the propositions that are of least interest to respondents are **Travel** and **Non-core services**. The other propositions have some potential to motivate but require either a more resonant evocation of the problem, or a clearer practical explanation of how ID cards could address it.

Generally, respondents are more supportive of propositions that are presented as benefiting society as a whole, rather than the individual,

since this fits better with their beliefs about identity cards. However, where individual benefits are both plausible and motivating, as in the financial propositions, some respondents come to appreciate that the scope and benefits of the scheme might be greater than they had first thought. Nevertheless, it is likely that the benefits for the country as a whole will remain for most people the overwhelming rationale for introducing ID cards.

3. **The take-up propositions**

Discussion of the take-up propositions can invite criticism of the scheme because it reminds respondents that ID cards will not be universally compulsory from the start. It also lets respondents know, sometimes for the first time, that individuals will have to pay for their ID cards themselves.

Once these objections have been put aside, it is widely accepted that certain groups of people should be a higher priority for the scheme than others, and/or should be offered an ID card at a reduced cost. A minority believe that the targeting of specific groups is unfair.

Of the groups suggested, **16 year olds** are the least contentious. Given that ID cards will change the way that society operates, it seems sensible for the new generation to 'grow up with' the scheme. Issuing cards to everyone turning 16 is also seen as a way of rolling out the scheme and guaranteeing that, eventually, everyone has a card.

Benefit recipients and **people in positions of trust** are also widely approved as early targets for the scheme. In both cases, there is a clear advantage of issuing cards to these groups: namely, a reduction in benefit fraud and greater protection for children, the elderly and vulnerable adults.

Compulsory cards for **prisoners**, and particularly ex-prisoners, are more controversial and raise fears about the real purpose of the scheme. Cards for the **police** receive a muted welcome, while cards for the **Armed Forces** are seen as having no real benefit.

Finally, it should be noted that respondents tend to be thinking of compulsory rather than voluntary cards for these groups, particularly in the case of benefit recipients, people in positions of trust and prisoners,

where the perceived benefit is for society rather than the individual. Once these groups have been identified as a good target for the scheme, it seems half-hearted to let individuals choose whether or not to have a card.

E. MAIN FINDINGS

1. **Contextual points**

1.1 Awareness of and initial reactions to the ID Cards proposal

Awareness of the proposal to introduce ID cards was almost universal; only a handful said they had not heard anything about the idea, mostly within the C2DE sample. Otherwise the idea was well known, though the impression was that it had not been in the news in the recent past.

It was notable that even when stories about ID cards were in the media, these had not always registered. During the period of fieldwork reports appeared covering several aspects of ID cards: problems with checking biometric information, the fact that ID cards were now to be separate from passports and the possible cost of the system. Only a few respondents had noticed these stories, and they did not appear to have had much impact on general perceptions of ID cards.

As has been evident in previous research, confidence in ID cards being introduced varied widely. Many respondents felt it was inevitable in light of growing threats of terrorism and illegal immigration; they believed the government would have no option but to use ID cards to help address these issues. Others were more doubtful; they were not convinced ID cards would be launched, not because there was an inherent difficulty in doing so but because the idea had been suggested in the past and not reached fruition. Even those who were most confident that ID cards would be launched had no feeling of certainty about when this would happen.

"I think the Home Secretary has been scared off it by the left wing of the Labour party. I think the noisy minority in this country who get up to things they shouldn't, I think they are making such a fuss about it that I'm not sure they are going to do it."

G13: 61-75, BC1, financial services, Scotland

"You hear about it and then it never seems to come to fruition."

G12: 46-60, C2DE, age-restricted products, Scotland

"We don't have a government in this country that is going to bring this in... We've been crying out for years to have it... It seems too good to be true."

G1: 31-45, C2DE, core public services, London

"It's too soft. The technology is there to get everyone's information on a database. Please do it now. Tesco can do it. We don't have it in us to do it because we're British."

G1: 31-45, C2DE, core public services, London

Knowledge of specific proposals and features also varied considerably, but was often inaccurate and/or incomplete. There were a number of assumptions and expectations about ID cards. The most widely held belief was that ID cards would be compulsory to have: many people thought they had heard this, or if not, assumed it was the case because they could not envisage the system working unless it was mandatory. Many also believed ID cards would be compulsory to carry; this perception again came from news stories, hearsay or was assumed.

"We'd all have the ID card in our drawer along with our passport and driving licence. If you're going to bring this in, you might as well make people carry it."

G1: 31-45, C2DE, core public services, London

Related to this it was often believed that if cards were compulsory to carry there would be fines for people found without their card.

Another major assumption was that the cards and/or the system (the database linked to the cards) will carry a large quantity of detailed personal information on each individual. Specific expectations here varied, but the information was believed to include one or more of: medical records; DNA; criminal records; employment details; and financial information.

The research did not address the issue of cost, but there was a widespread assumption, largely based on press stories, that individuals will have to pay for the cards; this caused concern. Those who had heard sums quoted thought they were in the region of £75-£85.

1.2 Perceived purpose

Unprompted assumptions about the purpose of ID cards invariably focused on their benefits to society rather than benefits to the individual. Their primary function was seen as the prevention of a range of illegal activities, by requiring everyone to be able to prove their identity. Specifically people believed that ID cards were being proposed as a response to problems of illegal immigration, terrorism, international organised crime and benefit fraud.

Few respondents had concrete ideas about how ID cards would help address these threats, but many believed that somehow they would play a part. The common thread to this perception was the notion that ID cards would protect law-abiding citizens from threats from elsewhere. This meant threats from outside the UK, particularly countries where terrorists are believed to be based; other parts of the UK, where people believe there is more illegal activity than in their locality; and different sectors of the population, particularly asylum seekers, benefit claimants and criminals.

"It's a good idea to have one because it will hopefully stop organised crime and terrorism. It'll winkle out the people who shouldn't be in this country; they won't be able to hide or use false names. But it should be compulsory for everyone, or not at all."

G5: 31-45, BC1, concerned about safety, South West rural

"One of the biggest things that would stop is people who claim to be five or six different people who claim housing benefit and cost the government an awful lot of money."

G8: 31-45, BC1, regular travellers, South Wales

A few respondents mentioned other possible benefits of ID cards unprompted, including health tourism.

"I noticed in my doctor's a notice saying to foreigners, 'You must pay for your treatment'. I hadn't seen that before. So [the ID card] could make sure that you were [entitled to free treatment]."

G5: 31-45, BC1, concerned about safety, South West rural

ID cards were expected to be more effective in combating illegal immigration and benefit fraud than terrorism. On a practical level it was more difficult to envisage how ID cards could prevent terrorist activity, because terrorists were more determined, better organised and likely to be legally resident in the UK. A minority were less convinced that ID cards could protect the country from external threats generally, and felt that the government was using ID cards to support its policies on immigration and asylum.

ID cards were characterised as about keeping threats away or at bay, not about making life easier for the law-abiding. This was deemed at least acceptable if not welcome by the majority of the sample.

The principle of ID cards offering benefits to the individual did not ring true for most of this sample. In part this was because it conflicted with

expectations of ID cards: this was not what they were believed to be about. It was also because few had considered how ID cards might be of help to them: the first response was that there was no obvious need. This was reinforced when individual benefits were introduced in the discussions. These were often rejected because they were less plausible: it was harder to discern individual benefits of ID cards because proving identity was not currently a significant problem for most people in mainstream society.

Individual benefits were also seen by some people as a means of 'selling' the idea of ID cards, especially in the context of assumptions about paying for cards. The feeling here was that the government believed people would be more prepared to pay for cards if they felt there was a tangible benefit to themselves in having cards. Another aspect of this was a feeling that putting forward individual benefits was overly paternalistic and condescending – people did not want to be told that ID cards would be good for them.

On consideration and after further discussion, acceptance of the individual benefits of ID cards grew. The prospect of a simpler and foolproof system of proving their identity appealed to some respondents – if it really worked as promised. There was also some acceptance that the need for and purpose of an ID card system, at both society and individual levels, would grow in future as it became more important to make places of work, commerce and public importance secure.

"It's nice to know you can produce that and it's evidence of who you are, what you are, why you are."

G10: 46-60, BC1, core public services, North

At a more specific level there was some belief that ID cards could be helpful to segments of the population which do not have the forms of ID available to the majority, particularly elderly people, benefit claimants and recent immigrants.

1.3 Role of government

The research did not set out to explore the role of government in introducing and running ID cards, but this came up in most discussions and had a significant influence on attitudes.

Many people had contradictory views about the government's role in ID cards. They accepted that ID cards have to be from and of government or the state, for a variety of reasons. Though they did not express it in these terms, it was clear that ethically and philosophically most members of the public felt that only the government/the state has reason to, and the authority to introduce ID cards. It was also generally understood, if not explicitly, that only the government could generate and push through the necessary legislation to introduce ID cards. Finally most people assumed that only the government or a government body would have the resources to set up and run the system.

Nevertheless, the fact of government involvement in ID cards prompted concerns, objections and sometimes hostility to the idea in principle from a small number of respondents. Part of this was probably to do with inherent suspicion of governments by some: it is not unusual for governments to engender feelings of suspicion and distrust.

The impression among many people was that ID cards were something that should benefit us all and that we should have, but that government, as the proponent of the idea, was trying to own. Related to this, there was a feeling among a substantial minority that the government was using ID cards as a smokescreen to mask ineffective policies in areas the system was trying to address, particularly illegal immigration. The logic here was that if the government had effective policies in place to stop illegal immigration (and other problems), ID cards would not be needed.

The consequence of this apparently contradictory thinking was that even those who accepted ID cards in principle were inclined to criticise the proposals presented to them. This was particularly reflected in response to the propositions, especially those offering benefits to the individual.

1.4 Safety: summary of views

There was a strong and persistent belief that the ID card system would rely primarily on use of the physical card itself. Respondents struggled to understand how biometric technology would still allow identity checking even in the absence of a card. This assumption had

considerable implications for respondents' opinions of the scheme, their queries and their concerns: they dwelt at length on whether or not the cards would be compulsory to carry; they had difficulty comprehending a process of verification that did not involve showing the card or having it scanned; and they expressed strong concerns about issues of safety.

The expectation was that holders of ID cards would feel a strong emotional attachment to their card: it would have a conceptual value for them and they would worry about it being lost or stolen. Respondents' specific concerns were either that someone could steal their ID card and use it fraudulently, for example to gain access to a service or to use in conjunction with a credit card to commit fraud; or that someone could use the card to access potentially private or valuable information about the card-holder. This concern persisted in spite of reassurances about the limited nature of the data that would be held on the card and on the Identity Register. These tangible concerns were underpinned by an irrational, instinctive fear of someone obtaining their ID card and misusing it in some unspecified way.

There were also worries about the safety of the Identity Register. Respondents had little trust in databases and expressed a belief that accomplished hackers could infiltrate even the most secure system. The concern in this instance was that a hacker might steal information about an individual from the database, perhaps to use in conjunction with a stolen ID card. Although some felt reassured that biometric data would make this more difficult, others believed that criminals would be able to steal and clone even biometric information. However, most of these respondents accepted the ubiquity of databases elsewhere in their daily lives. It seems likely that concerns about safety were exaggerated by the general focus on crime and security in the research, and by the desire of some respondents to find ways to criticise the ID card proposals.

1.5 Compulsion: summary of views

Although some respondents were aware that ID cards would not be compulsory to carry, all assumed that they would be compulsory to own. There was surprise and disappointment that this might not be the case. In part this reaction illustrates the familiarity of identity cards as a

concept, and respondents' strong beliefs that ID cards must be universal by definition.

Respondents also argued logically for a compulsory scheme: they believed that, if the cards were voluntary, then only 'law-abiding citizens' would apply for them, and this would make it impossible to control access to services. This reflects the belief that ID cards are about exclusion rather than inclusion, and are primarily intended for 'others', not 'me'.

When the identity card proposals had been better understood, many respondents called for the cards to be compulsory to use in certain circumstances. The perceived benefit of this was that it would make the cards effectively compulsory to own, even if there were no actual penalty for not registering. Some wanted cards to be compulsory for accessing the majority of services, while others feared this would be inconvenient for the 'law-abiding citizen' and could unfairly exclude people who were not carrying their cards. Instead, most supported compulsory use of ID cards for accessing key services such as health, benefits and financial services, particularly at the point of application or registration, rather than daily use.

1.6 Verification: summary of views

The different levels of verification required careful explanation but largely made sense once understood. Low level verification was the most familiar and easiest to understand: respondents assumed this would involve showing the card itself, with particular reference to the photograph. At the other end of the scale, high level verification was also easily comprehensible, once respondents had understood the principle of biometric information. It was assumed that this would involve scanning the iris or fingerprint and checking that the identity matched the name on the card. Two points are worth noting, however: first, that many assumed the biometric information would be held on the card itself, not on the Identity Register, which had safety implications; and second, that the concept of verifying identity using biometric information alone, without any reference to the card, was hard to explain but was thought potentially useful once understood.

The principle of medium level verification was more difficult to convey. Chip and PIN was the most accessible analogy, since this was now widely familiar. The prospect of verifying identity by confirming ‘known facts’ was rather less intuitive and seemed cumbersome.

Opinions varied as to which services and circumstances should require which level of verification, and further detail can be found under each of the individual propositions below. Overall, high level verification was seen as a means of controlling access to core services and reducing high value fraud, to be used when registering for services, opening bank accounts and so on. Medium level verification was about providing extra security in a range of contexts without excessively inconveniencing the consumer, for example when registering for non-core services and making medium or high value credit card purchases. Finally, low level verification was about providing slightly higher security in day-to-day situations, for example when accessing services.

It should be noted that respondents spontaneously associated each of these levels of verification with increasing security in some way, rather than improving ease of access for the individual.

2. **The core proposition**

2.1 Overall

The core proposition largely reflected issues that respondents themselves had suggested as potential benefits of ID cards. However, when these benefits were presented all at once, respondents often became cynical about the ability of ID cards to achieve them. This cynicism was exacerbated by negative feelings towards government generally and a corresponding desire to find fault with the ID card proposals. Respondents tended to react to the core proposition as if it were suggesting that ID cards were a panacea that could cure all of society’s ills, rather than a step in the right direction.

“They are all good ideas, but how is this card going to achieve all these things? How is this magical card going to safeguard everyone and keep you protected?”

G14: 46-60, BC1, regular travellers, Northern Ireland

“The idea is fantastic. That’s nirvana, that’s what you want. But it’s just not going to happen.”

G16: benefit recipients, 21-40, Surrey

Respondents were also reluctant to believe, at least initially, that a card that does little more than establish identity could achieve these benefits. Many had expected a much more comprehensive card and/or register, holding extensive information about each individual, and were surprised and disappointed that the scheme would be more limited.

Some of the benefits suggested in the core proposition were also thought too vague to be convincing. Those that worked best were those that made some reference to how the cards would be used in practice, thus explaining how the suggested benefit might be achieved.

Overall, the potential benefits to society resonated more strongly than the benefits to the individual. This was largely because the society benefits were more in line with respondents' expectations of what the ID card scheme would be about: designed for the good of the country, not the individual; separating those who are entitled to services/benefits from those who are not; and about cementing the perceived differences between 'people like us' (law-abiding citizens) and 'people like them' (criminals, fraudsters, spongers). The greater resonance of the society benefits also reflected the fact that respondents' perceptions of problems in society were not necessarily mirrored by their personal experiences: for example, many believed that identity fraud was increasing and needed to be reduced (society benefit), but had not been victims themselves and were not particularly troubled by the risk of identity fraud happening to them (individual benefit).

Appreciating the individual benefits of identity cards required a leap of imagination and a significant change of attitude. Moreover, the promotion of individual benefits could seem like an attempt by the government to over-sell identity cards, partly to justify the cost.

"I would much rather they said they had a problem with illegal immigration and require everyone to carry this card, and not try to sell it to us with these benefits."

G7: 21-30, C2DE, financial services, South Wales

2.2 Society benefits

The proposed society benefits were unarguably desirable and were broadly in line with respondents' spontaneous views about what an ID card scheme should try to achieve. However, the resonance of the proposition was tempered by a feeling that, taken together, these

benefits read like an emotive statement of society's ills, rather than a targeted list of problems that ID cards can plausibly tackle.

Respondents also questioned whether the government would have the political will to achieve some of these benefits, for example by deporting illegal immigrants or refusing healthcare to those unable to pay for it. There was also persistent cynicism about the security of the scheme and a stated belief that determined fraudsters would find a way to forge cards or use them fraudulently, thus undermining the benefits.

Illegal immigration was, for many respondents, the primary focus. This was a core concern, often spontaneously assumed to be the main objective of introducing the scheme.

"I don't think enough onus has been put on trying to weed out illegal immigrants. It says the ID card will 'help with the fight', but I'd have thought that would be their primary reason for doing it."

G16: benefit recipients, 21-40, Surrey

Reducing illegal immigration was also reasonably plausible, on the assumption that excluding (and deporting) illegal immigrants is all about being able to establish identity. Some questioned the ability of ID cards to achieve this benefit, however, given that new immigrants may not be required to have the cards until they had been resident in the UK for three months, and that the cards would not be compulsory to carry. A small minority was concerned by what they saw as an unjustified focus on illegal immigration, designed to play on racist and intolerant attitudes.

"The problem with this is that it brings up the racism card. The top benefit there is immigration. It shouldn't be up there. ID cards should be about people's welfare in the country. The trouble with ID cards is it makes people think about the numbers of immigrants in the country, and that shouldn't happen."

G1: 31-45, C2DE, core public services, London

One or two disagreed, recognising the potential of identity cards to protect legitimate immigrants from exploitation and harassment.

“If it protects people, then yes, it’s important: people who come here and get abused by organisations, get paid a pittance for doing work. I don’t think people should be exploited. Anyone who needs to come here for safety and can live a relatively good life here, then they should come. If it protects people from a humanitarian point of view then it’s a good thing.”

G8: 31-45, BC1, regular travellers, South Wales

Reducing **illegal working** was also a resonant benefit for some respondents, particularly those who worked in industries where illegal working is believed to be widespread. However, the role of ID cards in dealing with this problem was not wholly plausible because employers were often thought to be complicit in hiring illegal workers.

“It won’t reduce illegal immigration because they’ll still come in and get a job on a building site and be paid in cash.”

G14: 46-60, BC1, regular travellers, Northern Ireland

“Illegal working is a bit of a red herring, because a lot of people who work illegally are working for companies who are quite happy to employ illegal workers. I know companies who do employ people who are probably claiming benefits.”

G13: 61-75, BC1, financial services, Scotland

“People in this country employ illegal immigrants because they get cheap labour and they’re willing to do it. I can’t see how this will help unless they’re found out.”

G17: benefit recipients, 41-60, North

Fraudulent access to health and benefits was an emotive and relevant topic, linked closely to illegal immigration, although ‘health tourism’ was not a universally familiar descriptor.

“[The biggest benefit would be] not having loads of illegal immigrants, because that’s the main thing that’s getting people down. When your mum can’t have a heart operation or whatever.”

G1: 31-45, C2DE, core public services, London

The ability of ID cards to help tackle this problem was plausible, as long as cards were required to register for core services, and perhaps at the point of use. The benefit was significantly undermined by the prospect of these services continuing to accept other forms of identity.

Organised crime was a less pressing concern. The problem seemed remote, partly because the link between organised crime and neighbourhood crimes such as drugs offences, although understood in principle, was not strongly felt. However, the role of ID cards in

reducing organised crime by restricting the use of multiple identities was plausible.

The value of ID cards in combating **terrorism** was less clear. Although terrorism was often top-of-mind as a reason for introducing ID cards, it seemed more a theoretical than a personal concern. When respondents thought about terrorism in detail, the potential of ID cards to tackle the problem was unclear. Terrorists were characterised as ‘masterminds’ and were expected to find a way round the problem of needing an ID card. Alternatively, they might be British citizens with legitimate cards. It was ‘common knowledge’ that the terrorist attacks in America and Spain were not prevented by identity cards: the same might be true of an attack here.

“I could get an ID card but how do you know I’m not a terrorist? Just because I’ve lived in this country for however many years.”

G16: benefit recipients, 21-40, Surrey

The proposition suggested that ID cards could help prevent terrorists from using multiple identities and raising funds, but these activities were not clearly understood.

2.3 Individual benefits

For most respondents, the individual proposition was much less plausible and resonant than the society benefits. Although the two were closely related (the one was seen as the ‘flip-side’ of the other), talking about the benefits of ID cards from the point of view of the individual was less convincing and less relevant than the society perspective. As with the society proposition, the suggested individual benefits of ID cards were unarguably desirable in principle, but respondents were sceptical as to whether they were achievable. Several of the benefits were vague, intangible and hard to define, and it was not at all clear how ID cards would bring them about.

“It all sounds very good.”
“These are big promises.”
“When you read it you think, ‘Yes, that would be great in an ideal world’; but we don’t have an ideal world.”

G1: 31-45, C2DE, core public services, London

Ease and convenience of proving identity was an acceptable and plausible consequence of introducing ID cards, but it tended to be seen

not as a benefit but as a means to an end. Proving identity is what ID cards are all about; but the reason for doing this is to achieve other benefits (reduce fraud, illegal immigration and so on). Very few respondents had experienced any real problems proving their identity in the past, so greater ease of doing so was not an issue for them personally. Although respondents appreciated the convenience of using just one form of ID, they felt that the impact on their lives would be minor.

"It would be handy to have a wee card so that if you had to prove your identity you could just produce that. Sometimes you have to go and get your passport which is at home, so from that point of view it would be useful. But it's not going to change your life, is it?"

G12: 46-60, C2DE age-restricted products, Scotland

Confirming the right to be resident elicited a similar response. This was a key function of ID cards, but was seen as a means to an end (helping to identify illegal immigrants) rather than a benefit in itself. At an individual level, respondents saw no benefit to them personally: they knew they were legal residents and had no need to prove this. In their view, the purpose of ID cards was to prove whether 'other people' have the same right.

WOULD IT BE GOOD TO BE ABLE TO CONFIRM YOUR RIGHT TO BE RESIDENT?

"No. But there are people who don't have a right to live in the country – they need confirming. So not necessarily us, but there are other people who don't have the right and it's a good way of picking them out."

G4: 16-20, BC1, age-restricted products, Midlands rural

Protecting against identity fraud was a significant and plausible use of ID cards but was often seen as a benefit more for society than for the individual. Most respondents had no direct experience of identity fraud and only a limited understanding of what it involved; they were not particularly troubled by the threat to them personally although they acknowledged it in principle. However, there was widespread awareness that identity fraud is increasing in the UK as a whole. Those few respondents who had been victims of identity fraud were much readier to concede an individual benefit in seeing it reduced (see section 3.2 below).

The relevance and appeal of making a **personal contribution towards fighting crime and terrorism** by getting an ID card was limited. Although respondents accepted the importance of having a card in order to make the system function, they did not see themselves as contributing personally towards fighting crime by doing so. Moreover, they were not motivated by the idea of protecting their own identities: although they thought it reasonable to suppose that criminals and terrorists would want to steal *someone's* identity, they saw no reason why anyone would want to steal *theirs* in particular. In short, although it might be agreed that getting a card is an altruistic act, any message to this effect ran the risk of seeming clichéd and condescending.

Making friends and family safer was widely dismissed as an individual benefit, because the proposition was too vague to be convincing. Respondents tended to associate 'safety' with a reduction in anti-social behaviour and violent crime, but they thought ID cards were unlikely to have an impact on these types of offences.

"If you're a burglar you still have an ID card, so how does that help towards fighting crime?"

G2: 46-60, BC1, victims of crime, London

"The crimes that do harm people are still going to happen – rapes are still going to happen, murder is still going to happen – whether people have ID cards or not."

G4: 16-20, BC1, age-restricted products, Midlands rural

Respondents also questioned the positioning of 'safety' as an individual benefit. They tended to perceive reducing crime as a benefit for the country as a whole, even though they acknowledged that this would have the net result of reducing the risk to their friends and family.

The prospect of **faster and more efficient access to public services** was not regarded as a key benefit of the scheme and was baffling to some or even treated with ridicule. In the absence of practical examples respondents had little idea of how this benefit might be achieved; particularly given that occasions when proof of identity is needed to access public services were thought to be very rare.

“What public services will there be faster access to? You go into hospital and someone in front of you has a broken leg and you’ve cut your finger; you’re not going to get seen any faster.”

G5: 31-45, BC1, concerned about safety, South West rural

Delays in accessing public services were attributed to under-funding and mismanagement rather than difficulties establishing identity, and raising the issue of access to such services invited respondents to criticise them more generally.

“Public services are nothing to do with knowing your identity, it’s about having the funds to make the health service work.”

G14: 46-60, BC1, regular travellers, Northern Ireland

Some respondents guessed that ‘faster access to public services’ might mean using fewer documents as proof of identity, but only a small minority believed that this could lead to significant time savings.

“I suppose what they mean here is that sometimes when you go along you have to produce something with your address on; a bill or that sort of thing. And now you might be able to show your card, and that will take away the need to produce anything like that.”

G13: 61-75, BC1, financial services, Scotland

Overall, the majority of respondents felt that the individual benefits of ID cards are less important, as long as the society benefits are achieved.

“The government feels... it’s got to be able to sell this to us and to others who might not want it. I don’t think people are looking at the [individual] benefits. The important thing is if it helps people in general.”

G13: 61-75, BC1, financial services, Scotland

The individual benefits were also undermined by the perception that there are currently very few occasions when proof of identity is required. However, some respondents acknowledged that this situation is already changing and will continue to change in future, and that we as citizens will need to prove our identity increasingly often.

At the moment, the individual proposition had most resonance for certain specific groups, namely:

- one or two respondents from minority groups who had experienced problems accessing services or proving their status

- people who had experienced a specific problem connected with identity (for example being the victim of identity fraud)
- people who worked in service-provider organisations such as the NHS and believed that identity cards could make their lives easier

3. The situation propositions

3.1 Financial services

3.1.1 *'My money and me'*

Respondents who had recently opened a bank account or applied for another financial product such as a mortgage or ISA reported considerable variation in the process involved and in the proof of identity required. Some described a relatively straightforward experience, with either little proof of ID required or a choice in the type of document acceptable. Others had found the process painstaking and precise in its identity requirements. Most respondents did not believe that proving identity in such situations was yet a significant problem, partly because opening a bank account is something that most people do relatively rarely, and only on a pre-planned occasion.

"It's only a couple more things in your bag, and it's not like you do it every day."

G7: 21-30, C2DE, financial services, South Wales

However, there was an expectation that banks and other financial organisations would become ever more demanding, particularly given the increase in identity fraud. Many respondents had already experienced an increase in the number and security of identity documents required to carry out a simple transaction, and there were scattered complaints about the inconvenience of not knowing in advance which documents would be required. Respondents acknowledged that it would be convenient to have one secure, universal form of ID that was guaranteed to be accepted everywhere, although this was not yet a powerful motivation.

"If you go and see the bank manager for something you wouldn't have to take loads of documents with you, if you've got one card."

G5: 31-45, BC1, concerned about safety, South West rural

“If you go to buy a mobile phone you have to provide a form of ID plus utility bills. If it was one card and they couldn’t deny it was you, then that would help.”

G12: 46-60, C2DE age-restricted products, Scotland

There were also doubts about whether or not the benefit would be borne out in practice: would the bank really be happy with just an ID card, or would they still want to see utility bills as well?

The main benefit of ID card verification when opening a bank account or applying for a credit card was the potential to reduce the risk of fraud. The phenomenon of identity fraud was well-known and was widely believed to be growing in frequency and seriousness. Although the threat was still theoretical for most, there was a belief at least on a rational level that identity fraud constituted a personal threat: ‘this is something that could happen to me’.

Verification of biometric information when opening a bank account or applying for a financial product was widely accepted as a means of reducing the threat of identity fraud. Given the seriousness of the threat, there was little or no feeling that this would be overkill. However, respondents queried how this would work in practice, particularly in cases where applications are made remotely by internet, phone or post. Some also found it hard to believe that banks would have the necessary equipment to conduct biometric verification; they assumed the equipment needed would be expensive.

“Not everyone is going to have these machines to read the cards, and I imagine some people wouldn’t appreciate giving out some of the details on the card to Joe Bloggs behind a counter.”

G5: 31-45, BC1, concerned about safety, South West rural

The prospect of using lower level verification to secure bank accounts was less convincing. Although some accepted that having to provide an Identity Registration number or ‘known facts’ such as a name in combination with a post code would increase security, others believed that this was just the sort of information that fraudsters steal. However, those who were concerned that user organisations would be able to access ‘private’ information on the card or database (based on a misunderstanding of how the verification system would actually work) were happier at the prospect of a purely visual check of the ID card.

“Will people insist on swiping your card? Obviously there’s some information on there that you might not want people to know. Do you want to give them your card so they can find out where you live? If your picture’s on there, it’s got to be you. Surely for 90% or so of transactions that’s going to be plenty.”

G5: 31-45, BC1, concerned about safety, South West rural

Another sticking point was that, once bank accounts or credit cards had been opened securely, protection against fraud would depend on verification at the point of use (see section 3.2.1 below).

Suggestions for other financial transactions when ID card verification might be worthwhile included:

- buying and selling shares
- taking out life insurance
- applying for a mortgage
- taking out a loan
- buying a car or house
- taking money out of an ATM

Using ID cards to secure online transactions was deeply contentious. There was a belief that accomplished hackers can capture any information ‘entered’ into a website; so if an Identity Registration Number had to be entered along with a credit card number, then a criminal would be able to steal (and use) both. Some were concerned that this might create more problems than it solved, because it would be harder for a consumer to prove that her card had been used fraudulently. Tentative attempts to explore the possibility of using biometric verification to secure online transactions met with some concerns.

“The worry is that some hacker could find out what your number was and, because it was linked to your [credit] card, then whoever you were buying from would take that as gospel. So it could be an even bigger mess.”

G13: 61-75, BC1, financial services, Scotland

One other downside of the financial proposition was that it gave rise to occasional concerns about the government being able to track individuals via their financial transactions and pry into their lives.

“If we go to the bank and open an account, or we go to Tesco and spend £50 on our card, is information being collected about us to see our goings on?”

G7: 21-30, C2DE, financial services, South Wales

3.1.2 ‘Not in my name’

Respondents were less interested in the prospect of ID cards preventing a fraudster using **their** identity to commit financial crimes against **someone else**. Although respondents welcomed any reduction in this type of crime, they were not particularly concerned about the risk of being used as the conduit. As in the case of terrorism (see section 3.5.2 below), it was hard for people to believe that a fraudster would choose their identity as opposed to anyone else’s, and difficult to visualise the ‘personal upset’ that might be involved in proving they had not been responsible.

Similarly, the prospect of ‘doing my bit’ to combat money laundering did not resonate. This was partly because the idea of making a personal contribution to fighting any type of crime seemed clichéd and condescending, but also because money-laundering was a remote and unemotive concern. Although it was theoretically acknowledged to be a problem, respondents had not knowingly experienced the consequences themselves. While they did not explicitly reject the statement in the proposition that money laundering is linked to neighbourhood crime, the connection seemed far-fetched and tenuous. Some also questioned whether ID cards could do much to prevent money-laundering.

“If you think about smack-heads and stuff, they don’t use fraud to get their money, they go and burgle things and steal to pay for their addiction. So it’s not going to help that type of crime at all if you have ID cards.”

G4: 16-20, BC1, age-restricted products, Midlands rural

“Money-laundering’s like benefit fraud: it’s about having two groups of people each willing to do something that’s illegal. Having an ID card won’t stop those two people who are willing to do it.”

G7: 21-30, C2DE, financial services, South Wales

The other aspect of this proposition was that banks might be prepared to offer lower charges and interest rates to customers who used an ID card to verify their identity. This was treated with scepticism on the whole: banks always seemed keen to pass on higher charges to their customers, but never savings.

3.2 Identity fraud

3.2.1 *'Take charge'*

The problem of identity fraud was well-known and was believed to be increasing exponentially. Simultaneously, financial organisations were thought to be increasing their efforts to secure transactions. Using identity cards in a financial context was seen as part of this process.

"It's like with cheques: you used to be able to just write them; now you need a cheque guarantee card. It gets more and more... It's to protect you."

G2: 46-60, BC1, victims of crime, London

Respondents who had been victims of identity fraud themselves considered it a very serious problem and one which is difficult to resolve. While some had been the victim of a relatively straightforward deception such as fraudulent use of a credit card, others described how accounts or direct debits had been set up in their name, apparently using very detailed personal information. Respondents who were unaware of how the fraudster had managed to obtain and use this information felt particularly distressed and vulnerable. On the whole, victims of identity fraud welcomed the proposed use of ID cards in the financial context. Some were certain that ID card verification would have prevented the crime committed against them.

"I was in a café with a girl friend and I had my handbag on the floor, and the people on the next table bent down and took my purse. They went to Safeway and spend £38. If they'd had to show an ID card then they wouldn't have been able to use it."

G2: 46-60, BC1, victims of crime, London

"There's massive fraud on credit cards, and if this cuts it by 50% then it's worth it."

G2: 46-60, BC1, victims of crime, London

However, victims of fraud were also more likely than others to believe that identity fraudsters are very sophisticated in their methods. Some

took the pessimistic view that, whatever security measures are introduced, these individuals will find a way to bypass them.

For others in the sample, the most obvious and well-known form of identity fraud was the theft of a credit card or credit card details. Some were also aware of the risk of someone setting up a bank account or direct debit in their name. Although this latter type of fraud was imagined to be harder to resolve, it was also less familiar and seemed less of a direct threat.

Respondents initially found it easy to understand how ID cards could help reduce identity fraud in the financial context. They imagined that shops would demand to see an ID card with every credit card transaction, or at least for higher value purchases. After further thought, respondents raised numerous queries about how verification would work in practice. If a visual check of the card were all that was required, then this would be dependent on implementation. Many commented that shop assistants rarely check signatures properly at the moment and questioned whether they would be any readier to check a photograph. Some felt that, if this system really had the potential to work, then shops would already ask to see photographic ID such as driving licences and passports for every credit card transaction.

“How closely will they look? Anything is only as good as its policing. It depends on the individual in the shop. What if you change your hair? I sometimes make a mistake and use my wife’s card, which has ‘Mrs’ on it, and I still get away with it.”

G2: 46-60, BC1, victims of crime, London

Such a system would also be vulnerable to fraudsters using fake cards. Respondents imagined it would be relatively easy to fake the appearance of a card, even if the chip and biometric information could not be copied. Others made the point that shops were sometimes complicit in accepting false credit cards or identity.

“We had our credit card done by two corner shops and they went in and spent £1300! The shop-keeper was thinking, ‘Very nice, thank you’. If he’s going to get the money, why should he care?”

G2: 46-60, BC1, victims of crime, London

There were also queries about medium level verification. Using a PIN or ‘known facts’ to verify a transaction was more secure than a visual

check, but was thought little different from the Chip and PIN system. Entering a PIN for both a credit card and an ID card was expected to increase the time taken to conduct the transaction without bringing commensurate benefits in terms of security, particularly in the case of day-to-day purchases. Verifying identity using 'known facts' was likely to be even more time-consuming and potentially a little embarrassing or awkward.

Biometric verification was readily accepted to be much more secure, and some called for it to be widely implemented. But most were doubtful that many shops would have biometric readers installed, and having an iris or fingerprint scan seemed like overkill, particularly for a relatively minor purchase.

"You're walking into Tesco for a tin of baked beans: 'Hang on, I only want baked beans. What do you want my iris for?'"

G5: 31-45, BC1, concerned about safety, South West rural

After further thought, many suggested a compromise: that different types of purchase should attract different levels of verification. This could be determined either by monetary value or by the type of purchase. For example, biometric verification would be required for anything over a few hundred pounds, or where a long-term payment agreement was involved, for example when buying a mobile phone. Other purchases would either continue as they do currently, or would attract low level verification only.

"I think there should be a value to it. Say if you're spending over £1000. Not if you're going into Safeway for your weekly shopping."

G2: 46-60, BC1, victims of crime, London

There were also concerns about whether verification would be consistent. Patchy implementation, where some shops demanded ID cards and others did not, could lead to shoppers being 'caught out' because they were not carrying their cards. Many thought that this type of situation would quickly encourage the majority of people to carry their ID cards with them all the time. Although most welcomed this, a few saw it as the thin end of the wedge: a way of introducing compulsion to carry the card by the back door.

“If I was going to buy something and then I had someone saying, ‘You can’t buy that without an ID card’, when it’s not supposed to be compulsory... You’d be in a situation where you couldn’t buy things you used to be able to, because random shops would be saying you needed ID.”

G2: 46-60, BC1, victims of crime, London

“Shopping would be a lottery. ‘Can I go in there without an ID card?’”

G2: 46-60, BC1, victims of crime, London

There was also uncertainty over what would happen in the case of financial transactions conducted remotely by phone, post or internet. Although some accepted that the Identity Registration Number could be used to secure remote transactions, others were doubtful that this would increase security. A stolen wallet was likely to contain the victim’s identity card as well as their credit card. Online transactions were particularly contentious, as discussed above.

Other suggestions for occasions when ID card verification would be appropriate were:

- withdrawing large amounts of cash at the bank
- depositing large amounts (although the need for security in this situation was less intuitive than in the case of withdrawals)
- exchanging currency

3.2.2 ‘Every penny counts’

The suggestion that banks might offer ‘perks’ to customers who were prepared to verify their identity with an ID card was unexpected and puzzling. On a rational level, some respondents understood that banks would run lower risks with customers who used ID cards, although few imagined that this would lead to significant savings. But the large majority were highly sceptical that banks would pass on any savings to their customers. If there were any financial incentives respondents thought these would be minor, and only available while ID cards were being phased in. Once everyone had a card, there would be no point in offering incentives.

Overall, although the promise of any financial saving was welcome, the proposition tended to make respondents confused as to the reasons for

introducing the scheme – were ID cards intended predominantly for the benefit of society or for the benefit of the individual?

“Why don’t we all just go and do it? Why do we have to be bribed into it?”

G2: 46-60, BC1, victims of crime, London

3.3 Core public services

3.3.1 *‘Protecting my right to public services’*

The large majority of respondents had not experienced problems accessing public services and did not consider this a cause for concern. Most were thinking of health services here: from memory, patients rarely needed to prove their identity when accessing the NHS. Although respondents had clearly given this issue little consideration in the past, on balance they found it surprising how rarely identity is checked: none remembered having to prove their identity when visiting the doctor or attending a hospital appointment.

The only time when a patient is required to prove identity was thought to be when he or she first registers with a GP. Although substantial documentation is needed in this instance, few saw this as a source of difficulty or inconvenience. Registering with a GP is a rare occasion and is pre-planned: people know that they will have to take documents along with them to prove who they are.

There was a warm welcome for ID card verification in the health context, but this was not to make access easier for the individual. Instead, it was hoped that more frequent and more secure verification of identity would help to ensure that people who are not entitled to free treatment are charged (see section 3.3.2 below).

The suggestion that using ID cards might help to prevent mix-ups in the health system lacked resonance. One or two had experienced such a mix-up (in the health service or elsewhere), and one or two service providers also believed that the confusion of records was sometimes a problem; and these respondents warmly welcomed more secure verification as a result. For the majority, however, mix-ups were unfamiliar and did not pose a significant concern.

“My doctor asked me how I was managing after my heart attack and I thought, ‘I haven’t had a heart attack!’. It was a new doctor and she was referring to my brother, not me.”

G10: 46-60, BC1, core public services, North

“My name is the same as my sister-in-law’s and neither of us realised that we both had bank accounts with the same bank. I went to get my wages and they hadn’t gone into my account, and I was having a conversation with her the next day and she said, ‘I can’t believe it, I went to the bank and I had all this money that shouldn’t be there!’. They’d paid my wages into her bank account.”

G10: 46-60, BC1, core public services, North

Respondents were more impressed by the idea of hospitals using biometric information alone to identify patients without documentation in emergency situations. Although this concept was initially difficult to grasp, it was thought innovative and impressive once understood. It should be noted, however, that there was insufficient time to consider in detail the ethical issues involved in checking someone’s biometrics while he or she is unconscious, without explicit permission.

3.3.2 *‘Preventing abuse of our public services’*

The concept of ‘health tourism’ was widely familiar from the media, although the descriptor was not universally familiar. Most associated health tourism with illegal immigration rather than with people from abroad making short-term visits specifically to access UK health services. For many, health tourism was a resonant and emotive concern: increasing media coverage had publicised the issue and aroused anger. Concerns about health tourism tended to be felt at a society rather than an individual level. Respondents objected in principle to people using the health service when they were not entitled to do so, and blamed this in part for general problems facing the NHS such as delays and increasing costs. They had not necessarily experienced these types of problems themselves, however, or did not blame these directly on health tourism.

“They come over here for their heart operation and we give it to them because they’re here. They’re not entitled to be here in the first place.”

G1: 31-45, C2DE, core public services, London

“It’s going back to the people that live and work here and put into it getting more out of it, rather than people coming over here and draining the system.”

G10: 46-60, BC1, core public services, North

Respondents acknowledged that ID card verification could be a significant aid in identifying and excluding 'bogus' NHS users. But this would only work, they thought, if ID cards became the only acceptable form of identity when accessing the NHS. It should be noted that most were envisaging such a system preventing the 'un-entitled' from accessing health services at all, rather than identifying those individuals who needed to pay for treatment.

In practice, respondents thought that biometric verification would be appropriate when first registering for a GP. Low or medium level verification might then be required on each visit to the doctor or hospital. ID cards might also be needed on other occasions, for example when collecting a prescription.

"What about if they wouldn't give you your prescription [without showing your ID card]? That would cut out the prescription thefts that go on."

G10: 46-60, BC1, core public services, North

Some raised concerns about routine ID card verification in the health context: they were worried that elderly and other vulnerable people might forget to bring their ID cards to a GP appointment and would be denied treatment. There were also concerns that biometric verification on a day-to-day basis would be time-consuming and would place additional pressure on GP receptionists. Lower level verification would go some ways towards increasing security, but would not necessarily prevent deliberate abuse of the NHS by people deliberately lending their ID card to someone else, or using a forged card. On balance, most felt that the importance of excluding people who were not eligible for treatment outweighed the need to guarantee access for others on every occasion, but it was not difficult to imagine awkward situations and potential injustices.

Although ID cards were thought to have the potential to reduce abuse of the NHS, some questioned whether the government would have the political will to exclude people who were ineligible for free treatment but unable to pay.

"The trouble is, that people who are getting it free now will not have the money to pay for it, so we're going to pay for them anyway. The government wouldn't turn them away."

G1: 31-45, C2DE, core public services, London

Others cited evidence that this was beginning to happen. There were scattered reports of signs in GPs' surgeries warning that anyone ineligible for treatment would be forced to pay.

In spite of the warm welcome for a curb on health tourism, respondents were sceptical as to whether they would notice a direct impact on their own experience of the health service, or how quickly this would happen. This illustrated the gap that often existed between people's perceptions of problems on a national level and their own personal experiences. Respondents argued that a reduction in health tourism was unlikely to improve their own lot: other problems facing the NHS would continue; there would still be delays caused by people forgetting to bring their ID cards or trying to access treatment without one; and besides, the majority of people in front of me in the queue at the doctor are probably legitimate anyway.

"If you live in a small village like this one, then when you want to go to your local GP there aren't many illegal immigrants but it's still hard to get an appointment."

G4: 16-20, BC1, age-restricted products, Midlands rural

There were also concerns from a minority about the implications of this proposition as a whole. Respondents were occasionally alarmed by the perceived suggestion that society was going to become less tolerant and less charitable.

"People come to this country because it's a good country, and I don't want to see that change. What needs to change is how the NHS is dished out to people. If it needs means-testing then let's do it. If you really need help then you get it. If you have two cars and a swimming pool then you don't really need it."

G1: 31-45, C2DE, core public services, London

The need for greater security in the context of education, and the potential uses for ID card verification, were less clear. If children under the age of 16 were not going to be issued with cards, then these could not be used routinely to control access to schools. There was greater potential in the higher education context, but most universities and colleges were thought to have their own ID system in place already. One or two suggested that ID cards could be used to control access to schools by adults, on occasions such as parents' evenings and open days, but most thought this would be extremely difficult in practice.

There were some specific suggestions of scenarios where ID cards could be more useful, for example:

- verifying the identity of over-16s when they take public exams
- checking parents' addresses during the school application process to prevent fraudulent applications
- checking the identity of people taking driving tests, to prevent people sitting tests on behalf of others

3.3.3 'Creating a safer environment'

Safety and security in the health service environment was an emotive concern for the minority of respondents who reported bad recent experiences when visiting or admitted to hospital. These respondents welcomed the use of ID cards to improve security.

"My Nan is in hospital and all the doors are open so anyone can get in. There are teenagers in there smoking. I'm terrified for my Nan, because it's so easy for someone to walk in."

G1: 31-45, C2DE, core public services, London

"I go to X Hospital quite a lot, and when you walk in there are armed police. There must have been fifteen guards last time because of fighting and drugs. ID cards for a place like that would be fantastic."

G1: 31-45, C2DE, core public services, London

After further thought, respondents were unconvinced that ID cards would be effective. The main threat was believed to be posed by other *visitors* to hospital, not by other *patients*. While it was easy to imagine ID cards being used to verify the identity of patients, it was much harder to envisage such as system working for visitors.

One problem was that anti-social behaviour was not believed to be caused or exacerbated by difficulties establishing identity. The main concern was not serious crime, but intimidation and threatening behaviour that did not necessarily warrant police intervention but caused distress to patients and other visitors. Few thought that the perpetrators of such activities would change their behaviour just because their identity had been verified.

Safety in Accident and Emergency was particularly problematic. If emergency treatment continued to be guaranteed to everyone, then it would not be possible to limit access to A&E to holders of identity cards only. A system of 'access by ID card' was thought a little more workable on wards, but there was still no certainty that having to verify identity would make people behave any better. There might also be problems if tourists or non-residents wanted to visit friends or relatives.

"Are we saying that baby-snatchers and people in search of drugs won't have ID cards?"

G1: 31-45, C2DE, core public services, London

"How would that stop the likes of drunks who have got ID cards and are on the system? If they've got their card then they can still get through the door."

G10: 46-60, BC1, core public services, North

Another possibility was that hospitals could pre-vet all hospital visitors, so that only those with 'cleared' ID cards would be allowed in. The practical difficulties with such a system were expected to be enormous, however: staff would not have the time to pre-vet everyone, particularly as many would be one-off visitors; and there was a real risk of causing distress to people who might already be upset by the illness of a friend or relative.

"If I was upset and someone asked me for my ID card I think I'd be quite upset about that as well. It depends on the situation. After hours, when it's closed, or after a certain time of day: then maybe. But if you go at visiting time I think it would be a bit much."

G13: 61-75, BC1, financial services, Scotland

Some welcomed the prospect of ID cards being used to control access to particularly sensitive wards, such as maternity, paediatrics and intensive care. Others argued that access to these areas is already strictly controlled, often by keypad or telephone systems.

On balance, many thought that the most ID cards could achieve would be to help track down people who had committed a crime in hospital, if access were controlled by swiping ID cards, and that this in turn could act as a deterrent.

"There's the [ID card] evidence of you being there; there's the video camera to prove it was you as well. Bang: sentenced."

G10: 46-60, BC1, core public services, North

There was some merit in the suggestion that ID cards could be used to prevent public access to restricted areas. Most assumed that some sort of internal swipe-card system would already be in place, however. There was also some value in the idea that staff would face less abuse from patients if it was easier to establish eligibility for treatment, but this was not something that particularly affected or concerned respondents.

3.4 Age-restricted products

3.4.1 *'Now I'm old enough'*

Most young people reacted indifferently to the suggestion that ID cards could be used as a proof of age. For those old enough to buy the products they wanted, there were already plenty of other forms of identity available, such as student cards, Portman Group proof of age cards, International Student Identity Cards and driving licences. These types of card were reportedly accepted on the large majority of occasions and, although some were relatively easy to forge, this was not a concern for young people themselves.

"Everyone has got ID anyway. If you haven't got ID on you and you get asked, you're not getting in – so there are quite a lot of different forms of ID out there at the moment."

G4: 16-20, BC1, age-restricted products, Midlands rural

There was some benefit in a secure form of identity that was guaranteed to be accepted everywhere, but was not as metaphorically weighty to carry as a driving licence or passport.

"If it was the [only] ID then I think it would be good. I'm 17 now so I want to get into places [illegally], but if I passed 18 I'd think it was a really good idea."

G4: 16-20, BC1, age-restricted products, Midlands rural

"I'm not happy carrying my driving licence because I've lost it once before, but I just do – I carry it with me every day, wherever I go."

G4: 16-20, BC1, age-restricted products, Midlands rural

Conversely, a minority felt that an ID card was at least as 'serious' a document as a driving licence or passport, and thought they would feel unhappy carrying it around.

"There's something really unnerving about it. I don't know why, but I'd really hate to carry it around with me."

G4: 16-20, BC1, age-restricted products, Midlands rural

“The scary thing about that card is that it’s got your eyes and your name and all that stuff.”

G4: 16-20, BC1, age-restricted products, Midlands rural

Under-18s were concerned that a more secure card would make it harder for them to obtain over-18 products, particularly if it became the only or standard form of ID available.

“If you’re under-age and you know you’re going to get asked for it when you go into the off-licence, then you won’t go in.”

G15: 16-20, C2DE, concerned about safety, Northern Ireland

“If you’re going to be asked for ID then there’s nothing you can do, is there?”

G4: 16-20, BC1, age-restricted products, Midlands rural

In practice, young people imagined they would be asked to show their ID card when purchasing an age-restricted product. There were no particular concerns about a higher level of verification, but it seemed unlikely that smaller shops in particular would have card scanners or biometric readers.

The suggestion that a universal ID card system might reduce the embarrassment of being asked for proof of identity was widely dismissed. The reason young people felt embarrassed to be asked for ID, even if they had a card with them, was that it suggested that they looked younger than they were. This situation would only change if ‘being ID-ed’ became universal, as in the US.

“If it became important that they had to ask you, then it’s going to be good . In America if you look under 25 they will ID you when you walk in.”

G4: 16-20, BC1, age-restricted products, Midlands rural

3.4.2 ‘Caring for today’s youth’

The illegal sale of age-restricted products to young people was a concern for all parents, although the perceived importance of the problem varied greatly. Some had had bad experiences with their own children and were deeply worried, while others tended to regard ‘doing things underage’ as a fairly harmless part of growing up.

Use of ID cards as a proof of age was thought to have limited benefits. The current ‘student-card style’ identity documents were thought easy to copy, while a high-quality plastic card might make forgery more difficult. Some parents reported that their teenage children currently

carried driving licences and passports as proof of identity, and were concerned about the security of this; they felt happier at the prospect of their children carrying identity cards instead.

“You do see kids carrying their passports around with them which is really risky, because if your handbag goes missing then your passport’s taken.”

G12: 46-60, C2DE age-restricted products, Scotland

Some parents also thought teenagers themselves would be excited at the prospect of getting an ID card.

“I think a lot of kids at 17 will want to have that card, because it will make them feel grown up. It’s like with a driving licence, they’ll want to prove their age.”

G2: 46-60, BC1, victims of crime, London

In practice, parents thought that the system’s success would depend on policing and implementation, and many were sceptical about how much ID cards could really achieve. If shops depended on a visual check of ID cards to establish identity, then potential problems with forgery would continue. Medium or high level verification would be more secure but seemed heavy-handed for the sale of a packet of cigarettes, and besides, it seemed unlikely that small shops would have the necessary equipment.

A more significant problem was whether or not shopkeepers would ask young people for identity as a matter of course. Few shopkeepers were believed to ask for ID regularly at the moment, whether because they genuinely believed young people to be over-age, or because they could not be bothered, or because they were complicit in selling products illegally. Parents were keen that ID should be demanded routinely, although many thought this was unlikely to happen, even if the law were tightened up.

“{If shopkeepers were compelled by law to ask for ID} then they can’t get out of it by saying, ‘He looked older’. So it would help.”

G2: 46-60, BC1, victims of crime, London

“Do you think having an ID card is going to make any difference? At the moment, if a 16 year old goes into a shop to buy vodka the shopkeeper is just going to sell it to them. He’s done it before, and he’ll carry on doing it.”

G2: 46-60, BC1, victims of crime, London

“A lot of the offenders are the shopkeepers themselves who sell the kids these items. They won’t ask for ID because they know a lot of the kids are not the age they say they are, and they still serve them cigarettes and drink.”

G12: 46-60, C2DE age-restricted products, Scotland

The success of the ID card system would also be limited by the fact that it would not prevent older people from buying products on behalf of younger friends.

3.5 Safety in our society

3.5.1 ‘The common key’

Terrorism and organised crime were both important concerns, and many respondents initially assumed that tackling these problems was one of the main reasons for introducing identity cards. After detailed consideration of the proposition, however, respondents began to doubt whether ID cards would really be effective in this context.

Terrorists in particular tended to be seen as immune from the power of an identity card scheme. One issue often raised by respondents was that terrorists may well be legitimate British citizens with legitimate identity cards. They may not have committed any crimes prior to a terrorist attack, and may therefore be effectively unknown to the police. Alternatively, they may be able to avoid getting an identity card by operating completely outside normal society. Equally, they may be criminal masterminds with the power to fake even a biometric ID card, or to create a false identity from scratch that would fool government officials into giving them a card.

“I can’t see how a card is going to stop a terrorist buying a bomb and blowing someone up. They’re not going to go to the places where I use my card. They’re not going to go to a bank or a doctor’s surgery or anything.”

G5: 31-45, BC1, concerned about safety, South West rural

Similar beliefs were expressed about organised criminals, although there was a greater understanding of how such individuals rely on multiple identities to commit their crimes, and how ID cards might be able to help catch them or limit their activities.

“It would help, although it’s never going to stamp it out. But it would make it a lot more difficult for these types of people.”

G5: 31-45, BC1, concerned about safety, South West rural

“Whatever security measures you put in place, they are always going to be one step ahead of the game. The security is breached, then they put something in to stop that happening, then the criminal moves on to the next thing.”

G4: 16-20, BC1, age-restricted products, Midlands rural

Improving neighbourhood safety was a major concern across the board, but respondents were sceptical about whether ID cards could help. The main problem in reducing neighbourhood crime was thought to be in catching suspects in the first place, and in prosecuting them effectively. Establishing identity was not believed to be a significant problem for the police.

A number of respondents suggested that the police should have the power to stop people on the street and ask for their ID card; although they also believed that if the cards were not compulsory to carry then any potential benefit would be undermined. Petty criminals were thought to be less likely than anyone to carry an ID card with them, so they would still be able to lie about their identity and then fail to produce their ID card on a later occasion. Some believed that the police should be given powers to ‘march’ suspects home to check their ID card. Respondents did not appreciate how biometric technology would still allow an identity to be checked in the absence of a card.

“I think if you were walking along the street and something had just happened two streets away and the police are patrolling the area looking for anything suspicious, then I think they’re quite right to stop you.”

G15: 16-20, C2DE, concerned about safety, Northern Ireland

There were some concerns that using ID cards in the context of neighbourhood crime would give the police an excuse to harass certain individuals or groups. This was a particular worry among a minority of young people.

The prospect of the police having the power to check when a person’s identity record had been verified in cases of serious crime met with instinctive approval, but also gave rise to significant concerns. The concept of gathering evidence by checking suspects’ activity was familiar from cases where mobile phone records or travel documents have been used in this way. However, respondents were very hazy in their understanding of police powers in this context: of which records police are allowed to check, and in what circumstances. Most initially

thought that checking when a person's identity record had been verified was appropriate in any case of serious crime. For the most enthusiastic, 'serious' crime would constitute anything above petty shop-lifting. Others thought it should be restricted to 'major' crimes such as murder, rape, crimes against children and serious fraud.

A minority had serious concerns. The prospect of the police checking when a person's identity record had been verified seemed to confirm their suspicions that the scheme would be used to 'track' the movements of individuals more generally. Others who had initially been positive about this proposition raised concerns after further thought. They inferred that, if the police were checking the ID cards of anyone suspected of a crime, this would inevitably include the innocent as well as the guilty. This assumption, based on respondents' interpretation and extrapolation of the proposition, was welcome to some; but for many it increased fears that ID cards would be used to 'spy' on members of the public more generally. It also had the effect of making people believe that they would be using their identity cards all the time, not just when travelling abroad or opening a bank account.

"One thing that looks a bit strange is this thing about tracing suspects by looking at when and where they've used their card. That's only going to be useful if you've swiped this card every day. I could have been in Manchester six days in the week but come to London and killed somebody, and no-one's read my card."

G16: benefit recipients, 21-40, Surrey

Respondents also questioned whether or not the police would be able to search the ID card fingerprint database proactively, using fingerprints taken from crime scenes. Most saw this as a legitimate and valuable use of the Identity Register, although a few were concerned about the possibility of people being framed for crimes they had not committed.

The suggestion that the ability to match Identity Registration Numbers against other documentation would increase safety and reduce crime was not initially understood. When the system had been explained, respondents did not regard this as a specific benefit but simply as one aspect of how they expected the ID card scheme to operate. In order to understand the concept, people needed a specific example or practical application.

The suggestion that ID cards would be verified when checking the identity of people working in positions of trust was warmly welcomed. This is discussed fully in the context of the relevant take-up proposition, in section 4.3 below.

3.5.2 *'The good citizen'*

The prospect of using ID cards to protect one's identity from abuse by criminals did not resonate with respondents. Most thought it highly unlikely that a criminal would choose to steal their identity: they saw no reason why they would be a target. Although this was obviously a terrible thing to happen, most thought it a remote concern.

The idea of 'doing one's bit' to reduce crime by participating in the ID card scheme appealed to a minority among the elderly groups. For these respondents, 'doing one's bit' resonated with a desire for greater community spirit and invited associations with the Second World War identity card scheme, which many remembered. Elderly respondents often regarded the concept of doing their bit as reason enough to want an ID card, even if they themselves were unlikely to use it.

Others recognised the importance of everyone getting an identity card to make the system work. But they rejected the concept of 'doing one's bit' as earnest and do-gooding.

"If you got on your high horse and said, 'I'm contributing to society [by having a card]', you'd feel daft... People would think you were nuts."

G5: 31-45, BC1, concerned about safety, South West rural

There was some evidence, however, that this concept would be viewed differently if set in an emotive context such as child protection.

"But going back to the previous one, about people who work with children; I wouldn't have a problem with that, for peace of mind. I'd be quite happy to say I had an ID card."

G5: 31-45, BC1, concerned about safety, South West rural

3.6

Traveller

3.6.1 *'Fast-track traveller'*

In summary, respondents welcomed any increase in efficiency and security in the context of international travel, but were not convinced that the use of ID cards would make a significant difference.

In practice, respondents imagined that they would be biometrically verified and perhaps also show their card at all the points in the travel process at which passports are currently checked: at check-in, when going through departures or baggage scan, and perhaps when boarding the plane. There were very few problems with biometric verification being used in this context. International travel was still 'special' for the majority, and high levels of security checking were expected. Some knew that America had introduced biometric checks at airports and expressed no sense of overkill, although a few were sceptical that biometric checks would be carried out routinely in the UK.

"When you go through passport control how often do they check the passports? They're not going to stop everyone to get their fingerprints."

G17: benefit recipients, 41-60, North

Security outside the airport situation, for example on ferries and Eurostar, was less familiar. Respondents believed that the security process was inconsistent, with no set pattern of when passports and other documents were checked. Many thought there was room for improvement here, but were not sure that ID cards were the answer.

There were certain individual benefits in using an ID card in the travel context. In terms of format, a credit-card-sized identity card was significantly more convenient than a passport: it would fit easily in a wallet, so there would be no concerns about where to put it in a handbag or luggage; people were more likely to be carrying it with them all the time, so there would be less chance of forgetting it; and for some it seemed a less metaphorically 'weighty' document to carry around. As a result, respondents saw a real advantage in the ability to travel in Europe with only an ID card. This was particularly true of respondents who travelled frequently on business. As well as the convenience aspect there was also a psychological appeal: other Europeans have

been able to travel on their ID cards for years, so it is high time that the British can as well.

Another benefit suggested in the proposition was that travelling with an ID card would make it easier to replace a lost or stolen passport abroad, by providing another secure way of proving identity. Although respondents acknowledged that this might be true, it had limited appeal. Most people had never lost a passport abroad and did not expect to: this is not the sort of thing that happens very often. It was also thought quite likely that, if someone's passport were stolen, their ID card was liable to be taken at the same time. It did not occur to respondents that they might be able to prove their identity in this situation using just their biometric information. When this was suggested, it was seen as a significant advantage, and applicable to many situations.

There was greater cynicism about the potential of ID cards to save time in the travel context. Delays were usually thought to be caused by the sheer number of people passing through the airport and having their bags checked, or by plane delays. Even delays caused by security alerts were not attributed to problems establishing travellers' identity. Some suspected that the travel process would be slowed down by the introduction of ID cards because it would take a long time to check everyone's biometric information.

"I can't see how it will make travelling easier. The most frustrating thing about travelling is flight delays and air traffic control strikes."

G8: 31-45, BC1, regular travellers, South Wales

The suggestion that travellers with ID cards could benefit from a 'fast-track' system was generally rejected. Such a system would only work in the short-term, since it would cease to be a 'fast-track' once everyone travelling had an ID card. There was also a sense of injustice here: why should someone be treated differently just because they had an identity card?

3.6.2 'Doing my bit'

Although the use of ID cards to increase security in the travel context was welcomed in principle, the benefits were less clear after further thought. Even though terrorism was a major concern, particularly in the

context of air travel, respondents took a rather detached, fatalistic view of the risk. Rationally, they perceived that the chances of being the victim of a terrorist attack were small; perhaps smaller than would have been the case a year or two previously. There was also a sense of powerlessness and inability to control the risk.

“Obviously we’re all aware of 9/11, but how many years ago was that? And this isn’t going to solve the problem. If Bin Laden wants to do something, he’ll do it.”

G14: 46-60, BC1, regular travellers, Northern Ireland

When they thought it through, respondents were not at all sure how ID cards would enable the authorities to identify terrorists. Rational objections were easy to raise: terrorists are ‘master criminals’ capable of forging even the most secure ID cards, or of creating false identities and thus obtaining ‘legitimate’ cards; they might be UK citizens with bona fide ID cards (e.g. Richard Reid); they could be travelling on a foreign passport or a tourist visa; or, they could have been living in the UK for less than three months, with no need of an ID card.

“You would only have to have one if you had been here for longer than three months. So if I’m a terrorist I could come here for a week and make a bomb to blow up Harrods. That wouldn’t make me feel any safer.”

G8: 31-45, BC1, regular travellers, South Wales

Protection against terrorism would also depend on the security measures at foreign airports. A terrorist could carry out an attack on a flight *inbound* to the UK using a false ID card, knowing that his biometrics would not have been checked at the point of departure. The possibility that ID cards could help improve retrospective identification after an attack was also little comfort. Terrorists were regarded as fanatics, unlike other criminals: if they managed to bring down an aeroplane with a suicide attack, they would probably care little about being identified afterwards.

One suggested benefit was that ID cards could improve safety in the travel context by guaranteeing the identity of everyone on the plane. Again, this was not a resonant concern. Although stories about ‘air rage’ incidents were well-known, they were not treated particularly seriously. Compared with the potential for a terrorist attack, the risk of another passenger becoming obnoxious or abusive was easily dismissed. Little thought was given to the identity of fellow passengers.

The huge majority would be travelling on genuine identities and, assuming there were no terrorists on board, respondents did not really care who their fellow passengers might be.

"I don't care who's sitting with me... And I'm sure the person in front of me doesn't care that I'm sitting behind him. They just want to get where they're going."

G14: 46-60, BC1, regular travellers, Northern Ireland

"I don't care who's on a plane with me. I don't care whether they have a real ID or not, as long as they don't have any bombs, guns or knives."

G14: 46-60, BC1, regular travellers, Northern Ireland

Overall, the modest benefits of any extra security in the travel context were thought well worth any possible inconvenience, but were not a strong motivation for introducing the ID card scheme as a whole.

3.7 Other private and public services

3.7.1 *'Rapid access'*

The appeal of quicker and easier access to non-core private and public services was limited, since few respondents perceived any significant problems with accessing such services at the moment. Day-to-day use of services was usually straightforward, while registering for services, although a little more time-consuming, was too infrequent to constitute a major inconvenience.

"Does it matter that you have to fill in a form? Do you find it that difficult now?"

G8: 31-45, BC1, regular travellers, South Wales

"It's no more hassle putting a passport and a piece of paper [utility bill] in your pocket than it is an ID card."

G16: benefit recipients, 21-40, Surrey

Some respondents found it annoying not to have suitable identity documents when registering for services, however, and welcomed the prospect of one guaranteed form of ID, as long as this was all that would be required. And it was acknowledged that, as concerns about security increase, there may be more and more occasions when proof of identity is required.

"If you're the ninth person in a queue of nine, then I think it would be a good thing."

G8: 31-45, BC1, regular travellers, South Wales

Some respondents felt that the ID card would only be truly beneficial for the individual if it came to function as a 'super-card', accepted by the large majority of public and private services. In this scenario it would *replace* other forms of identity both during the registration process and in daily use. Respondents initially found it difficult to imagine which services might be relevant here, but after some thought they suggested gyms, video shops, libraries, sports clubs and some sports events such as football matches. In practice, respondents imagined that registration for such services would require medium level verification or even biometric verification for higher value or more secure services, with a visual check of the card for day-to-day use.

Some were concerned at the prospect of ID cards being used to access a wide range of services, particularly those in the private sector. In spite of reassurance about the limited amount of information on the card and Identity Register, some were worried that services would be able to access personal and potentially valuable information about their users.

"Your address isn't on your card, so if they swipe that card [to verify your address], how much more information will they have?"

G8: 31-45, BC1, regular travellers, South Wales

3.7.2 'I belong'

Respondents were largely sceptical as to whether identity cards would increase the acceptance of minority groups, either by themselves or by others. Although respondents tended to talk about 'illegal' immigrants when discussing immigration, it was clear that many resented immigrants generally, whatever their legal status. It was often thought that the government pursues a lax immigration policy and is too generous in its treatment of applicants. Divisions and alienation within society were thought to be caused partly by resentment of immigrants in principle, and partly by cultural and language barriers: neither of which ID cards would change.

"Saying it's going to encourage a sense of belonging isn't going to work. You're not going to get over the basic fact that if you've got a load of Croatians or whatever who've just moved in down the road and don't talk the same language, they're still going to feel alienated, and the local residents are still going to feel hostile towards them."

G16: benefit recipients, 21-40, Surrey

A handful of respondents also resented what they perceived as an implicit criticism of white British citizens for their racist attitudes towards minority groups.

One or two respondents at the other end of the spectrum were also disquieted by the proposition, believing that it perpetuated a quasi-colonial attitude.

"I don't like that, the idea of an ID card acting like a badge. That's going back to the old colonialism."

G8: 31-45, BC1, regular travellers, South Wales

A few respondents found the proposition more motivating. They accepted that ID cards could help to reduce tensions between white and minority ethnic groups and that the scheme would be beneficial for individuals from minority ethnic groups themselves by making it easier and less embarrassing to prove identity when accessing services.

"I think that's a positive. The communities that may be perceived to be here illegally, or may have racial tension, those people can then say, 'Yes, it's ok for me to be here'."

G16: benefit recipients, 21-40, Surrey

One or two also hoped that the scheme might start to chip away at the general public's failure to distinguish between legal immigrants, illegal immigrants and asylum seekers.

The other aspect of this proposition, that ID cards could make access to services easier for people who do not have other documents such as driving licences and passports, was broadly accepted. However, it was only actively motivating for the small minority who had experienced difficulties proving their identity, or knew others who had. Although the majority were aware that there must be some people in the UK who do not have a driving licence or passport, few had given any consideration to the kind of difficulties these people must face.

4. **The take-up propositions**

4.1 Overview

The principle of identifying certain groups of people who might be encouraged to have an ID card provoked substantially mixed feelings. Individually, some of the take-up propositions were warmly welcomed, particularly those pertaining to 16 year olds and people working in

positions of trust. When discussed together, however, they tended to induce a feeling of discomfort about the targeting of individual groups of people on account of their job or of some other factor. A sizeable minority expressed strongly-felt concerns about the potential for demonisation and injustice.

"I agree that people on benefits should have it at reduced cost, and 16 year olds should get it free, but I totally disagree with categorising other groups. Imagine if you work in a school and everyone else has got one, and you don't want one, and you're being made to just because you're a teacher."

G2: 46-60, BC1, victims of crime, London

Part of the problem was that respondents found it difficult to grasp the prospect of the take-up of ID cards being 'encouraged': there was a persistent assumption that cards would be compulsory for the specified groups. Many resisted the concept of 'encouraged' take-up because they regarded it as half-hearted. They felt that, if a good reason has been identified for certain groups of people to have identity cards, then it made no sense to leave the decision up to individuals. This was particularly the case where the benefit of a specific group having cards was for the protection of society, rather than for the convenience of the individual. Making the cards compulsory also increased the justification for reducing the cost.

The other complication when discussing the take-up propositions was the issue of cost. For some respondents, this was their first inkling that individuals would have to pay for ID cards, and their indignation about this had a tendency to cloud their response to the propositions. Some were also concerned about the cost implications of offering cards at a reduced rate to certain groups of people. Added together, the six take-up groups seemed to comprise a sizeable chunk of the population, and a few respondents realised that the more people receive cards at a low cost, the more everyone else will have to pay for them.

The overall effect of showing the take-up propositions was to reinforce calls for the ID card scheme to be made compulsory for everyone, if not immediately then as soon as possible.

"It's categorising. Either everyone gets one or you don't have them. Either you bite the bullet and stop namby-pambying around and get on with it and we all get cards [or you don't introduce them at all]."

G2: 46-60, BC1, victims of crime, London

4.2 16 year olds

Identifying 16 year olds as a priority for the ID card scheme met with strong approval. Most supported compulsory cards for this group, and enthusiastically embraced this as a means of rolling out the ID card scheme as a whole (not always appreciating how long it would take to cover the whole population in this way). Others realised that the cards would also have to be distributed in other ways, but nevertheless believed that issuing cards to all 16 year olds was the best way of eventually guaranteeing a universal scheme.

"If they're going to make it mandatory then maybe start with when you turn 16. It's going to be virtually impossible to get every single person to have an ID card, so this could be a way of getting it in."

G16: benefit recipients, 21-40, Surrey

There were also less tangible benefits of encouraging 16 year olds to have cards. If this was to be the way society functioned in future, then it made sense to ensure that the new generation of adults all have identity cards and get used to using them.

The majority also believed that cards for 16 year olds should be free, especially if compulsory. Even if the cards were voluntary, they should still either be free or very cheap. This was partly because 16 year olds would have difficulty paying for the cards, but it also resonated emotionally with the concept of 16 year olds growing up with the scheme. The prospect of cheap cards was also welcomed by parents, many of whom thought that they would end up paying the cost of their child's card themselves.

The argument that young people have trouble proving their identity and would therefore benefit from an ID card was accepted in principle, although rarely experienced in practice. Parents and teenagers themselves felt that young people tended to have more, not fewer identity documents, such as student cards and proof of age cards. Not all provided a secure proof of identity, however, and a few had had

difficulty accessing services because they did not have a passport, driving licence or utility bill in their name.

The suggestion that 16 year olds might feel a greater sense of citizenship if they had an ID card were widely dismissed. Young people themselves tended to ridicule this idea, while older respondents considered it an unrealistically rosy view of young people's attitudes. However, there was thought to be potential for the identity card to act as a badge of adulthood. Receiving an ID card at 16 would come to be seen as a rite of passage, rather like the issue of the National Insurance card at the moment.

"It could be like a coming of age thing. You're 16 and it's like, 'Yes, I've got my card'... I remember when I was at school, everyone getting their National Insurance card. It was like, 'Wow, I've got that', and you were really proud of it."

G4: 16-20, BC1, age-restricted products, Midlands rural

Respondents suggested that, if ID cards were not going to be compulsory for young people, then the issue of provisional driving licences should be conditional on having a card. This was expected to guarantee near-universal take-up.

"If I was 16 what would make me go and get it is if I couldn't go and get a driving licence until I had this card."

G10: 46-60, BC1, core public services, North

4.3 People applying for jobs in positions of trust

The suggestion that people working in positions of trust should need an ID card in order to obtain a Criminal Records Bureau check met with immediate and widespread approval. This was an emotive topic, reflected in the frequent reference to paedophiles elsewhere in the discussions. Respondents believed that the current CRB system was flawed, citing as evidence high-profile criminal cases such as that of Ian Huntley. Although the proposition was most resonant when applied to people working with children, it was also valuable in the context of care for the elderly and vulnerable.

"The thing I like [with this proposition] is being able to check up on teachers and caretakers in schools. Too many of them aren't being checked."

G16: benefit recipients, 21-40, Surrey

However, the initial welcome for this proposition was based on a misconception that the identity card or Identity Register would contain details of criminal convictions and sex offences. Although the prospect of ID cards holding such data gave rise to serious concerns among a minority, many warmly welcomed the inclusion of this type of information.

When it was explained that these details would not be contained on the card or Identity Register, there was considerable disappointment and confusion. Many respondents found it difficult to understand why the ID card would help the CRB check process if this type of information was not on the card; they found it hard to comprehend why a secure proof of identity would be so valuable. The explanation that using ID cards would help to speed up the process by confirming the applicant's identity was welcomed but not enthusiastically embraced, except by a few who worked in jobs requiring CRB checks and who realised the potential benefits.

A more powerful and resonant argument was that identity cards would make CRB checks more secure by preventing the use of false or multiple identities by applicants, and parallels were again drawn with the Soham murder case. The proposition suggested that the applicant's card would be checked visually and the Identity Registration Number verified. Given the perceived seriousness of the topic, however, many respondents called for biometric verification.

The downside of this proposition was its potential to cause confusion about what information would be contained on the card and on the register. For the minority who were concerned about the government's motives for introducing ID cards, it also increased suspicion that databases would be linked and that 'secret' information would be held and potentially misused.

"It's very naïve to think that there wouldn't ultimately be linkages [between databases]. If it's designed to stop the things they are trying to stop, then there has to be linkage."

G16: benefit recipients, 21-40, Surrey

4.4 People receiving benefits

Although reducing benefit fraud did not always occur to respondents spontaneously as a potential benefit or objective of the ID card

scheme, most enthusiastically embraced it. If implemented strictly, it was also one of the more plausible and workable benefits of the scheme as a whole. Respondents imagined biometric verification of people applying for benefits, and medium or high level verification when collecting payments.

It therefore made sense to identify benefit recipients as a priority target for take-up of ID cards. Many called for cards to be compulsory for this group, rather than voluntary: a system of no ID card, no benefit.

"It should be compulsory for them. If they don't have the card, they don't get the money... Purely and simply for identity's sake. There are people drawing money all over the place under different names."

G13: 61-75, BC1, financial services, Scotland

Most also accepted somewhat grudgingly that the cost of ID cards should be reduced for benefit recipients, particularly if take-up was compulsory.

"I suppose it would make it more possible that everyone gets one. If people on low incomes can't afford one then it's going to hold up the whole process."

G4: 16-20, BC1, age-restricted products, Midlands rural

A minority strongly resented subsidised cards for this group.

"I've been subsidising them for the last 20 years and I'm fed up with it. If they want it, they can pay for it."

G1: 31-45, C2DE, core public services, London

Although the society benefit of reducing fraud was regarded as the primary advantage of this proposition, some also appreciated the potential gains for benefit recipients themselves. ID cards could improve the process of applying for and claiming benefits, and would also make it easier to prove identity in other circumstances.

A minority objected to the proposition in principle. They considered it unfair to single out any individual group in this way, particularly if there were undue pressure to comply. Enforcing or encouraging take-up seemed to imply that benefit recipients were doing something wrong simply by receiving help from the state. There was a fear that issuing ID cards could increase stigmatisation rather than reduce it.

"We're talking about people on benefits as if they've done something wrong! I don't want to feel like I've been criminalised and it's compulsory for me to get a card just because I'm on benefits."

G2: 46-60, BC1, victims of crime, London

Benefit recipients themselves were generally in favour of encouraged take-up. They hoped that verifying identity using an ID card would help to speed up the long and complex process of applying for benefits, and would help prevent fraudulent claims. The process of collecting benefits on a day-to-day basis did not pose a particular problem, but some thought ID card verification would help prevent benefits being 'stolen' by others. Recipients also welcomed the prospect of a cheap card, although some doubted whether the price reduction would be substantial.

"If it really did stop [false benefits claims] then it would be cracking. Because it does happen a hell of a lot."

G16: benefit recipients, 21-40, Surrey

"If that's what it's designed to knock on the head, then why not start there? And if they've got a legitimate problem with the benefits thing then giving it to [benefit claimants] free is right."

G16: benefit recipients, 21-40, Surrey

Other benefit recipients were more sceptical about what ID cards could achieve in this context. In the case of applying for benefits, they believed that what slows the process down is the need to provide complicated financial information, none of which would be available on the ID card.

"I don't think it's actually going to change an awful lot. They're still going to ask you to fill out endless forms. It's not really going to speed anything up."

G16: benefit recipients, 21-40, Surrey

In the case of day-to-day payment of benefits, the process was increasingly automated via Direct Payment, and soon no benefits would be collected in person.

Others had concerns about changes to the process of collecting benefits. Fears were raised about losing the card or having it stolen: would this mean that benefits could not be collected until the card had been replaced?

“What if I lose my card on Saturday and I have to get my benefit on a Monday, but I can’t get it without my card?”

G16: benefit recipients, 21-40, Surrey

Another query concerned benefits collected on behalf of someone else, for example by a carer for a disabled person. Plus, there were more general concerns about whether ID card verification would slow down the system.

4.5 Police Service staff

Respondents tended to be puzzled by the suggestion that Police Service staff would be encouraged to register for ID cards. Although there was thought to be no harm in this, respondents wondered what the rationale might be, and why the public would be consulted.

Many assumed that the purpose of issuing police personnel with ID cards would be to verify their identity and check their backgrounds and criminal records. While it was clear that the police should be thoroughly vetted, respondents assumed that this already happened satisfactorily. Occasional stories, both real and fictional, about criminals posing as police officers or of unsuitable candidates joining the force, did not seem to have dented the general belief that police officers are who they say they are.

Similarly, it stood to reason that police personnel should have some sort of identification system, but again respondents assumed that this was already in place. The force was known to have an internal badge or number system which, unlike an ID card, would have the advantage of identifying individuals as police officers. Respondents had no problem with ID cards being used to control access to police buildings, but again saw no reason for consulting the public on this.

The idea that police officers could act as role models for the ID card scheme was widely dismissed. This was partly because the police were not universally respected, particularly in inner cities, in Northern Ireland and by some younger respondents. But even where respondents looked up to the police generally, they saw no reason why this respect would translate into positive feelings about ID cards, just because the police were encouraged to carry them.

“Role models? No policeman’s my role model!”

G4: 16-20, BC1, age-restricted products, Midlands rural

Set against this, there was a sense that ID cards were conceptually bound up with law and order generally, for example through the belief that police would be able to ask to see ID cards during stop and search. As a result, it made some sort of sense to respondents that police officers should be issued with cards. Some felt they should be able to ask to see a police officer’s ID card, if police had the power to ask for theirs; although they were not sure what this would achieve.

A few respondents were concerned by what they perceived as explicit and unfair targeting of the police. They believed that police officers were only members of the public doing a job, and it seemed unfair that they should be pressured into applying for a card simply because of their occupation.

“I don’t think they should be obliged to have it. There is already too much pressure within the Forces and the police; we know what it’s like with homophobia and racism.”

G2: 46-60, BC1, victims of crime, London

4.6 Prisoners and people serving community sentences

The suggestion that prisoners would be issued with compulsory identity cards often met with immediate and enthusiastic approval as a matter of principle. There was also a warm welcome from many respondents that ID cards would help the authorities ‘keep an eye on’ high-risk offenders such as sex offenders. This was an emotive subject, guaranteed a powerful response. The reactive benefit of helping to track offenders down once they had committed a crime was clear, although respondents were not sure whether ID cards would work proactively to prevent or discourage crime.

“I think it gives a false sense of security, because you can’t ‘control’ sex offenders.”

G8: 31-45, BC1, regular travellers, South Wales

“Prisoners should have one, especially if they’re getting released, so [the police] can keep tabs on them.”

G12: 46-60, C2DE age-restricted products, Scotland

The suggestion that ID cards would enable ex-prisoners to access services more easily did not resonate with the majority, who had given no consideration to how ex-offenders go about their daily lives. A

minority of respondents had experienced prison themselves, or knew others who had, and recognised that having an ID card would be extremely helpful in allowing ex-offenders to verify their identity. This would make it easier for them to access services and benefits, and might in turn reduce rates of re-offending.

“From personal experience, a lot of offenders get out and have no job, no accommodation and no money. So if they have access to benefits straight away that’s possibly one route to stop them re-offending.”

G16: benefit recipients, 21-40, Surrey

In spite of the enthusiastic initial response, the tangible benefits of issuing ID cards to prisoners were less clear on closer consideration. The proposition suggested that the cards would help keep track of offenders within the prison system, but respondents were not aware of any problems with the current system and did not regard this as a concern. If ID cards would be more effective than the current system then respondents were quite happy for them to be used in this way, but they had no strong views on the subject.

A minority of respondents expressed serious concerns about this proposition on behalf of ex-prisoners. These respondents strongly believed that, once a prisoner has served his sentence, he should be treated the same as anyone else. The belief (inaccurately inferred from the proposition) that it would be possible to track the movements of ex-prisoners seemed to constitute unfair persecution and an assumption that individuals would re-offend.

“If they’ve done something wrong and they’ve done their time and they’ve come out again, then even if they’re high risk you can’t make them have something that no-one else has got.”

G4: 16-20, BC1, age-restricted products, Midlands rural

“These are the people in society who are already having their civil liberties infringed on with DNA, fingerprints etc.”

G16: benefit recipients, 21-40, Surrey

Others were concerned about the implications of this proposition for the ID card scheme as a whole. The suggestion that ex-prisoners might be tracked appeared to confirm that ID cards would enable the government to track all individuals through their daily lives. This deepened the suspicions of those already hostile to the proposals.

4.7

MoD and Armed Forces

Respondents were largely baffled as to the rationale behind encouraging take-up of ID cards among Armed Forces and Ministry of Defence personnel. As with the police, the initial assumption was that ID cards would be used to verify the identity of Forces personnel and check their backgrounds, but it was assumed that extensive background checks are already carried out. It was also assumed that the Armed Forces already have some form of internal card or badge system.

There was thought to be some value in using ID cards to control access to sensitive buildings, but respondents knew of no problems with the current system. They thought it unnecessary to consult the public on any change to an internal system.

The concept of the Armed Forces acting as role models for the ID cards scheme was largely ridiculed. As with the police, respondents saw no reason why respect for the Forces would translate into positive feelings about ID cards.

"If I see an Army fellow with an ID card it's not going to make me want one because he's got one. I can't see that working."

G8: 31-45, BC1, regular travellers, South Wales

And unlike the police, there was no conceptual link between the Armed Forces and ID cards, and no reason for reciprocal checking of cards between Forces personnel and the public: this was a domestic not a military scheme.