Future of ticketing research summary

Transport Focus has worked with Great Western Railway (GWR) to seek to understand rail passengers’ expectations with regard to the future of ticketing – how they expect to pay for travel and to show that they have paid for a journey. The research looked at passengers’ current travel behaviour, their use of technology, and their experience of new payment methods used in other aspects of their daily lives.

Transport Focus recruited an online community of varied passenger types from across the GWR network. Over five days the 45 community members shared their experiences of rail travel, technology and payment systems. The infographic below attempts to represent the various strands to the discussion within the context of technological developments.

The community felt that the rail industry is lagging behind other sectors in adopting new payment technologies. They look at Apple, PayPal and Amazon as setting the pace and at Transport for London, with Oyster and contactless payments, as leaders in terms of early adoption for land transport in the UK. The community envisaged an integrated platform for the future that will apply across modes and across the country to provide a door-to-door travel solution.

The research sets the context for possible research into individual future solutions. Any such research should take care to encompass all passengers, including those not used to new technologies and payment mechanisms.

Mike Hewitson,
Head of Policy, Transport Focus
Working with Transport Focus on this project has provided an excellent view into how rail customers see the future for train travel. The methodology used allowed respondents to take us on their journey in the future showing us the importance of interconnectivity to them. This interconnectivity was expressed both in terms of wants and ideals, but also in their expectations that are so readily being set by other industries. While the project started out as looking at the future of ticketing, the respondents reframed this to the way they want to travel in the future, enabling this to be captured in the infographic that emphasises the parts of a business that will need to come together to adopt, adapt and develop this future.

Jeremy Clarke,
Head of Research, Great Western Railway