



Smartcards on c2c:
what do passengers think?

Agenda

1. Introduction

Project context, research objectives, overview of method and sample

2. Key findings

3. c2c Smartcard User Profile and Mindset

4. Passenger Journey with the c2c Smartcard

5. Passengers' views regarding the c2c Smartcard

6. c2c staff experiences of, and views on, the smart ticketing pilot

7. Conclusions



1. INTRODUCTION

Project Context

- c2c operates the rail service from Shoeburyness to Fenchurch Street via Southend and Benfleet.
- c2c has introduced **smart ticketing** on this route over two phases. **Phase 1** was launched in June 2014 when the scheme was introduced to a part of the route up to Tilbury Town and West Horndon stations (the two stations just outside the Oyster boundary). **Phase 2** was launched in October 2014 when the scheme was rolled out to the rest of the route into Fenchurch Street.
- Research was required to help c2c improve the scheme, as well as to expand the evidence base needed to assist the introduction of smart ticketing elsewhere in the country.

Overall Research Objectives

- **To understand passengers' awareness, views and experience regarding the c2c Smartcard**
- **To understand staff views about, and experience of implementing, the c2c smart ticketing pilot**

Specific Research Objectives

1. To understand passengers' experiences of getting the smartcard

- Awareness of the smartcard
- Reasons for applying/not applying for the smartcard
- Expectations from, and assumptions about, the smartcard
- Experience of the application process and receiving the card

2. To understand passengers' experiences of using the smartcard

- Experiences of buying tickets for the smartcard, using it at the gates, using the online account, receiving customer support
- Views about benefits and drawbacks of using the c2c Smartcard to pay for travel

3. To understand c2c staff experiences of implementing the pilot

- Information and training they received prior to the introduction of the card
- Experiences of the process of introducing the smartcard
- Observations' about passengers' response to the introduction of the smartcard, as well as key questions and any issues passengers had in relation to the smartcard

4. To gather passenger and staff views on how the scheme can be improved

- What worked well/less well about how the c2c Smartcard was introduced
- What can be learnt from this pilot that can help when smartcards are introduced elsewhere

Method: Overview

- **24 face-to-face depth interviews with passengers** (12 with non-users and 12 with users)
- **71 intercepts with passengers** (46 with non-users and 25 with users)
- **Online Survey with c2c Smartcard users** (620 completed interviews)
- **16 depth interviews with c2c staff** involved in the pilot

Qualitative fieldwork with passengers was completed between 9 March and 22nd May. Online survey with c2c Smartcard users was conducted between 2nd and 30th April. Qualitative fieldwork with c2c staff was carried out between 1st and 19th June.

Qualitative Sample: Overview

Passengers: Users	Passengers: Non-users	c2c Staff
Depths	Depths	Depths
2 x female, 10 x male	6 x female, 6 x male	1 x Learning Development Officer
2 x 18-30yrs old	4 x 18-30yrs old	2 x Customer Relations Officers (email, phone support)
6 x 31-50yrs old	3 x 31-50yrs old	1 x Station Manager
4 x 51+yrs old	5 x 51+yrs old	12 x Station Staff
Good spread in terms of ticket types, frequency of travel and reasons for travel	Good spread in terms of ticket types, frequency of travel and reasons for travel	All involved in the pilot
Intercepts	Intercepts	
26 x respondents	45 x respondents	

Qualitative Sample: Detail 1

- PASSENGERS - USERS
- *Additional criteria:*
- All passengers to use the Shoeburyness to Fenchurch Street c2c line at least once a month
- 10 to be frequent passengers: Frequent passengers defined as those who travel at least once a week or more.
- 2 to be infrequent passengers: Infrequent passengers defined as those who don't travel on a weekly basis but travel at least once a month.
- All to have the c2c card
- MOST (a minimum of 10) OR ALL to use their c2c card to pay for their travel on the c2c line
 - None or a maximum of 1 respondent who has the card but hasn't used it yet
 - None or a maximum of 1 respondent who has the card, has used it in the past but has stopped using it
- A mix in terms of destination stations respondents typically travel to: To include a mix of stations where smart ticketing was introduced during Phase 1 and 2
- A good spread of those who typically continue their rail journey on the c2c line by using other forms of transport and those who don't
 - Among those who do continue their journey, a minimum of 3 to pay for their journeys on other forms of transport by the Oyster card
- Most passengers to be travelling for work or education but a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 3 who (also) travel for leisure
- A good spread in terms of the ways in which passengers buy their tickets for their c2c Smartcard
- 2/3 of respondents to be men and 1/3 to be women
- A minimum of 1 and a maximum of 2 respondents to have a physical, hearing or visual impairment

Qualitative Sample: Detail 2

- PASSENGERS – NON-USERS

- *Additional criteria:*

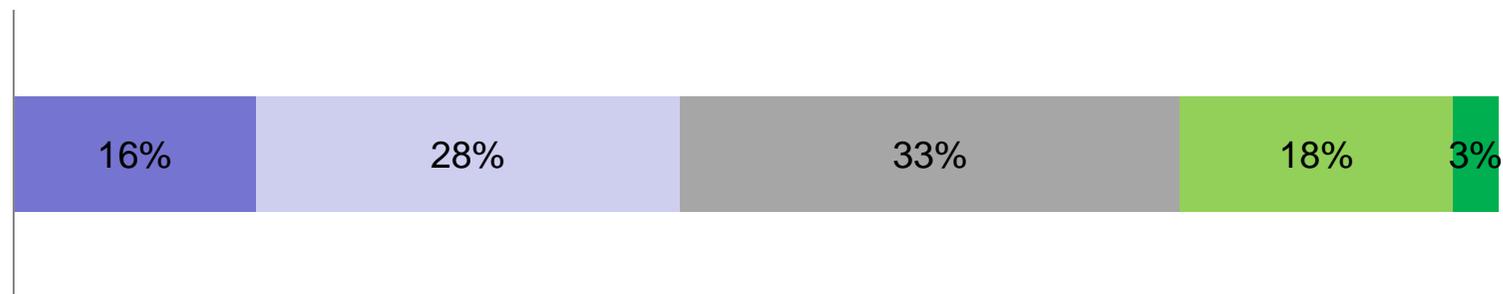
- All passengers to use the Shoeburyness to Fenchurch Street c2c line at least once a month
- All to be normally travelling from a departure station that is outside of the Oyster zone
- A good spread of stations respondents travel from
- A good spread in terms of destination stations respondents typically travel to: To include a balanced spread of stations where smart ticketing was introduced during Phase 1 and Phase 2
- All to pay for their travel (none to receive free travel)
- A good spread in terms of frequency of using the c2c line: A minimum of 6 frequent users and a minimum of 3 infrequent users
- Even split of passengers travelling for work/education and leisure
- A good spread of those who typically continue their rail journey on the c2c line by using other forms of transport and those who don't
 - Among those who do continue their journey, a minimum of 3 to pay for their journeys on other forms of transport by the Oyster card
- A good spread in terms of awareness of smart ticketing in general, and the c2c card in particular – Minimum 3 and maximum 4 respondents to be aware of the c2c card
- A range of warmth towards using the c2c card – none to be completely closed (i.e. reject using c2c card)
- Even split between men and women
- Minimum 1 and maximum 2 to have a condition that affects adversely their ability to make journey by train

Quantitative Sample: Overview

- 620 users of the c2c Smartcard completed online surveys
- All c2c Smartcard users were sent an email inviting them to take part in the survey
- Survey was carried out between 2nd and 30th April

Age:

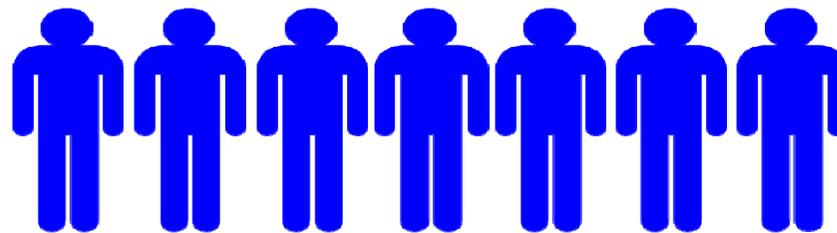
■ 18-30 ■ 31-40 ■ 41-50 ■ 51-60 ■ 61+



Gender:

65% Male

33% Female





2. KEY FINDINGS

Key Findings 1

- **The c2c Smartcard is currently serving most season ticket holders well but is less relevant to passengers who need other types of tickets**
 - For example, daily tickets are not available online but can only be bought at ticket machines which makes the card less convenient and appealing to those passengers
- **Season ticket holders and frequent passengers therefore dominate among card users and they appreciate the benefits of the card**
 - Many like the speed and ease of passing through the gates, the durability of the card and better protection in case the card is lost or stolen
- **There are some areas where technical issues will need to be resolved to reduce difficulties some passengers are experiencing**
 - For example, being able to collect the purchased tickets at the gates rather than having to queue to do that at ticket machines, as well as simplifying the online purchase process is likely to significantly improve card user experience

Key Findings 2

- **Station staff gave mixed feedback in terms of how well prepared they felt for the introduction of the smartcard**
 - All appreciated the practical elements of the training and ongoing support they received from each other and managers in answering passengers' queries and resolving issues
 - However, they questioned the move towards the online self-service and felt frustrated with what they saw as a limited role they were given in providing customer support regarding the smartcard
- **Staff recognise the card has the potential to benefit more passengers when the technology is developed to allow for more products and flexibility**



3. C2C SMARTCARD USER PROFILE AND MINDSET

Typical c2c Smartcard User

*It was the ease of use I wanted and I embrace technology. It's easier than having to fish your paper ticket out of your wallet and replacing it throughout the year.
[Male, 40, User, Annual Season Ticket]*

- Quantitative data suggest a typical c2c Smartcard user is predominantly...



Male

(65% men, 33% women)

Travelling almost daily

(84% users travel this frequently)

Season ticket holder

(91% have season tickets, 6% other tickets)

Working full time

(94% work full time, 4% work part time)

It is for season ticket holders only outside of the London zones. Mostly who we are targeting at the moment. [c2c Staff Respondent 14]

This is the group of passengers who see the c2c Smartcard as relevant to them

Gender. Base: All respondents (620)

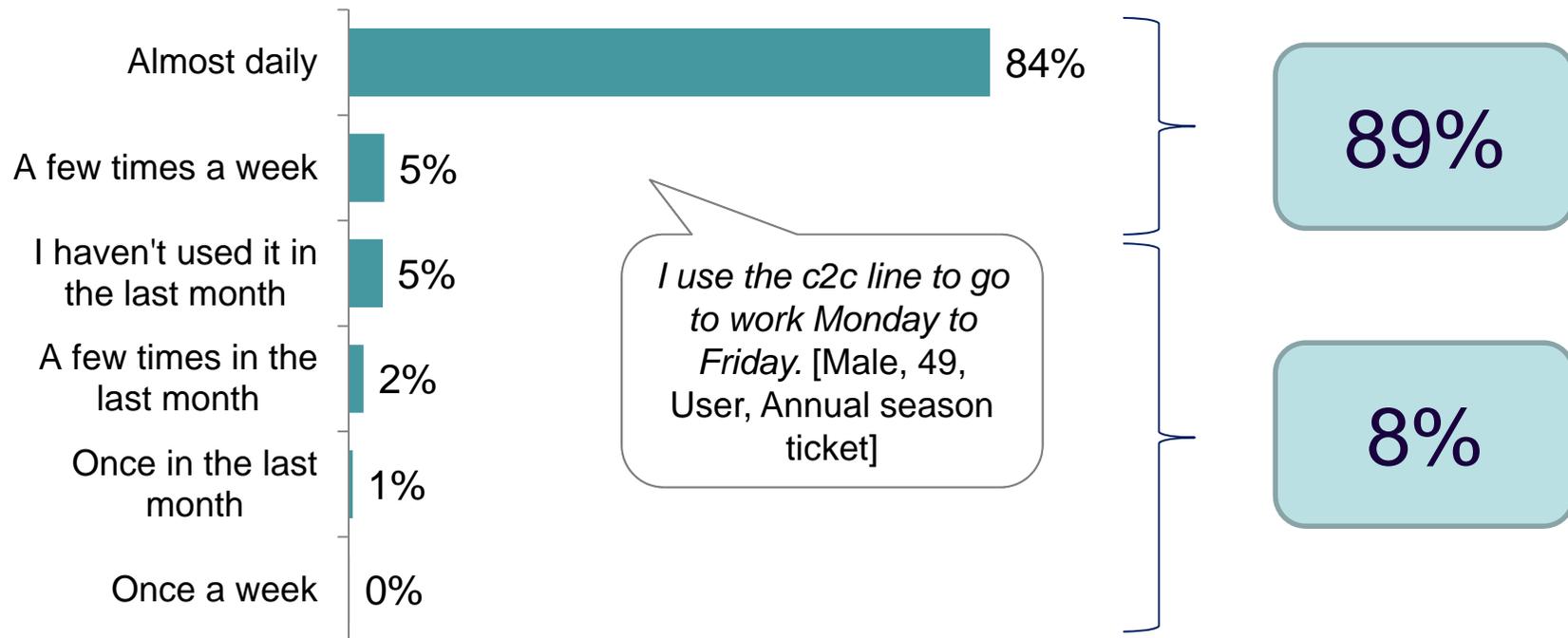
Q7. How often have you used your c2c card in the last 4 weeks? Base: All respondents (620)

Q10. Which of the following types of tickets do you have on your c2c card at the moment? Base: All respondents (620)

Q24. Which of the following applies to you? Base: All respondents (620)

Frequency of travel

- Quantitative data further suggest that at the moment the card is predominantly used for daily commutes with less than 10% of card holders using it on a weekly/monthly basis or less often

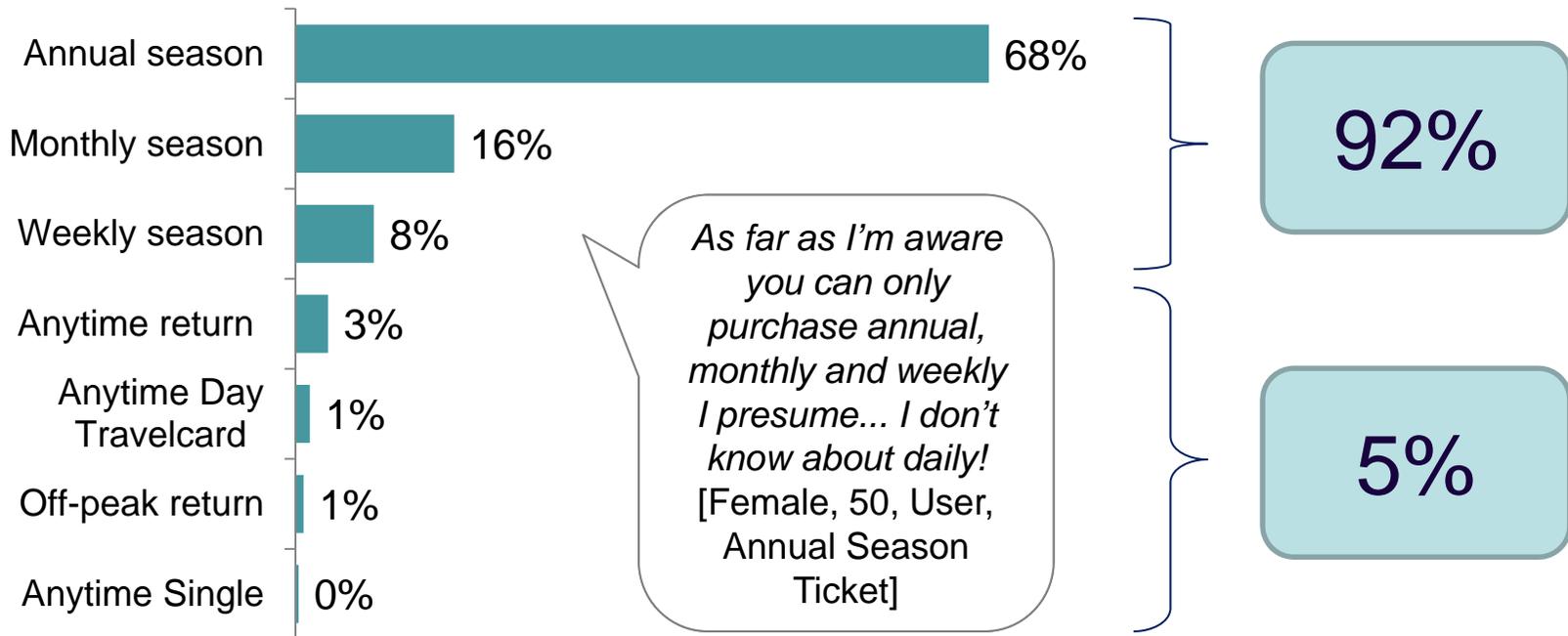


Passengers travelling less than daily are underrepresented among card holders...

Types of tickets

Mine is annual. I just buy it once, then you can forget about it. [Male, 60, User, Annual season ticket]

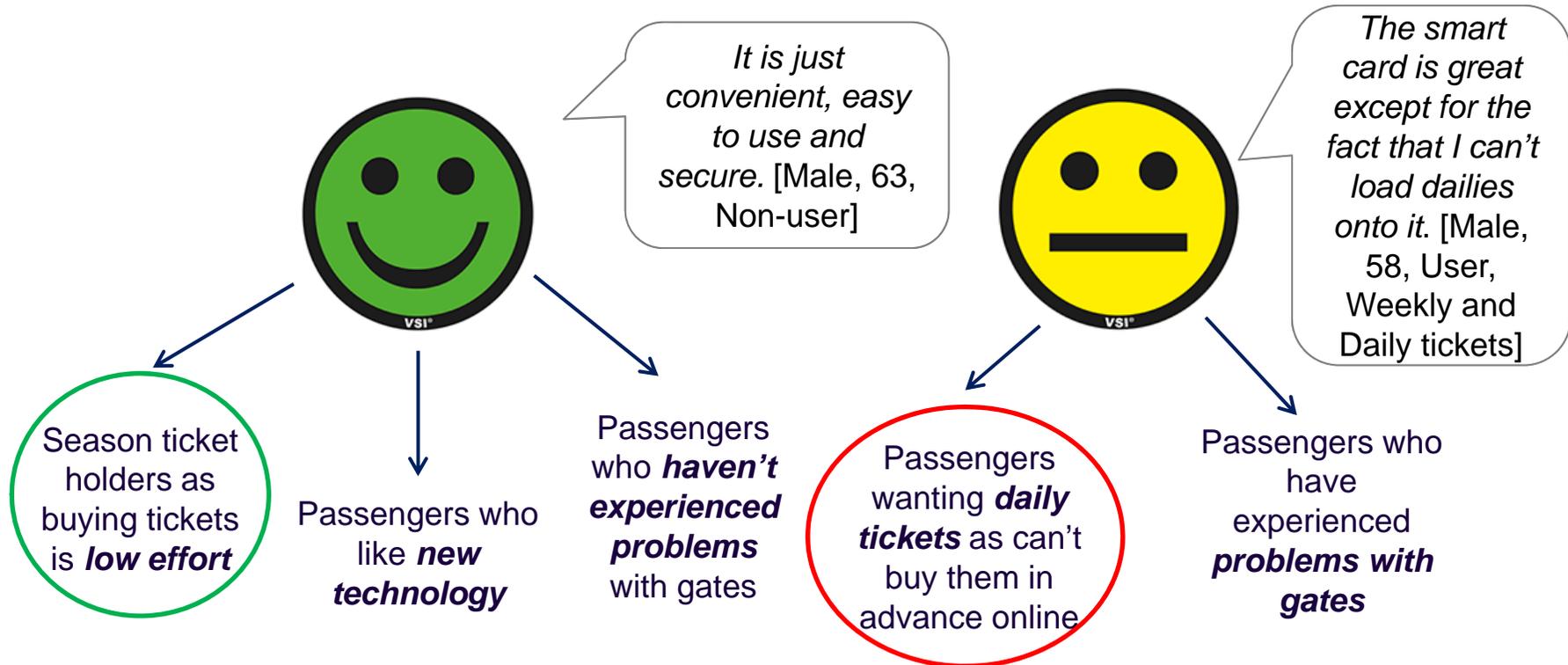
- **Predominance of daily commuters is also reflected in the types of tickets used as the vast majority have season tickets on their card**



...as are those wanting other types of tickets

Satisfaction with the Smartcard

- Qualitative research further revealed a split between card users in terms of their satisfaction with the card mainly linked to the type of ticket they wanted



These differences in the ease of using the card with different types of tickets led to the current profile of card users

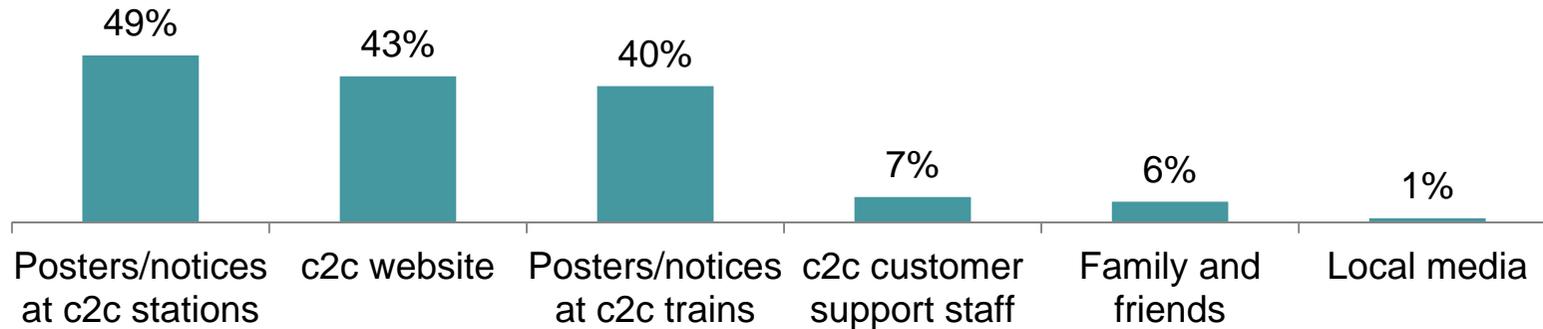


4. PASSENGER JOURNEY WITH THE C2C SMARTCARD

Awareness of the c2c Smartcard

The advertising boards at Fenchurch Street Station were the first place I found out about the c2c smartcard then the onboard adverts and leaflets. [Male, 49, User, Annual Season Ticket]

- **Promotional materials at stations and trains cited as main sources of awareness by both users and non-users, however users were more likely to look for information online too**



Users

- Some users very pro-active in terms of seeking information, e.g. following c2c on Twitter, asking about smartcard introduction by email
- A few annual season ticket holders also informed by staff at the point of renewal

Non-users

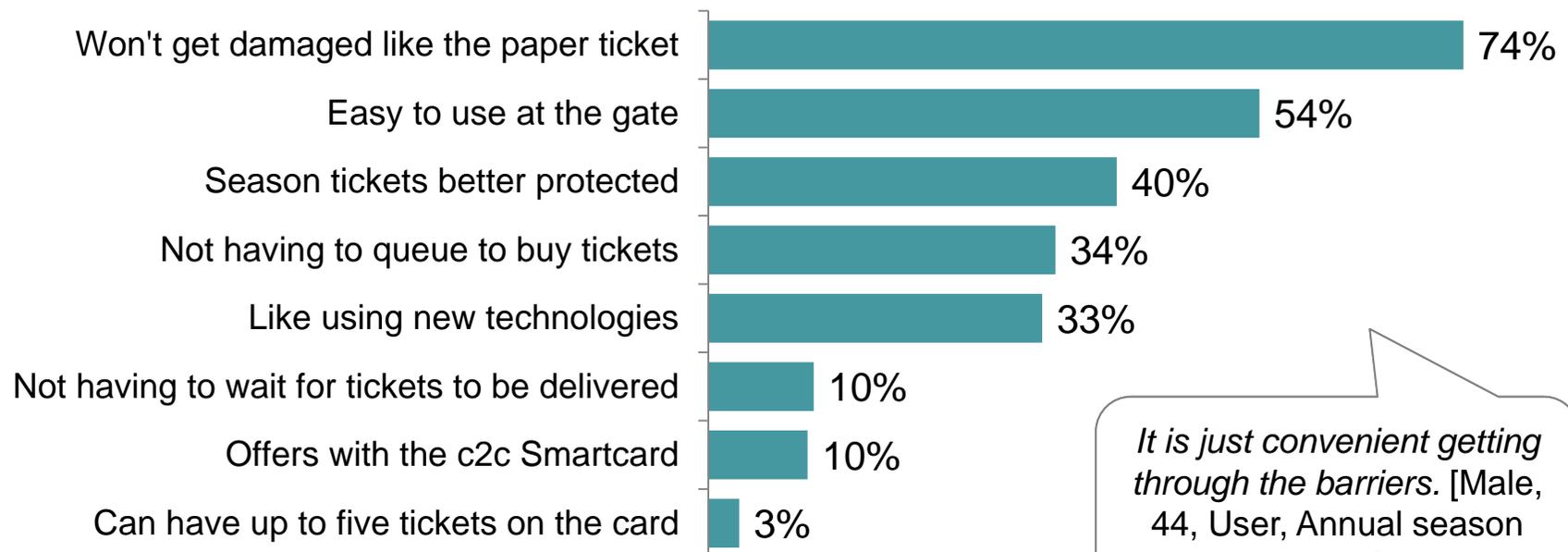
- A mix of those unaware of the card and those who knew about it
- Those aware noticed posters, leaflets, barriers, signs on card readers

Data suggests there may be a greater role for station staff to play in raising awareness of the c2c Smartcard



Reasons for getting the card

- Both quantitative and qualitative data suggest *durability* of smartcards, followed by desire for increased *speed* and *protection* in case ticket is lost were key perceived benefits motivating passengers to apply for the c2c Smartcard



It is just convenient getting through the barriers. [Male, 44, User, Annual season ticket]

I think the main benefit is to not to take the ticket out of the wallet. Also, paper tickets used to get corrupted and then you have to apply again for them to issue a new one. That used to happen about 3 or 4 times a year. [Male, 60, User, Annual season ticket]

Reasons for NOT getting the card

- **Most non-users thought the c2c Smartcard was for a different type of passenger to them so didn't think it was relevant to their travel**

Who is the card for?

- In our qualitative sample of non-users, less frequent passengers thought it was for frequent passengers and vice versa
 - Some wanted the posters to explain more what the smartcard is, who it is for and what tickets you can have on it

I've never known what it was. I thought it was something to do with the Oyster card. [Male, 63, Non-user]

Other reasons

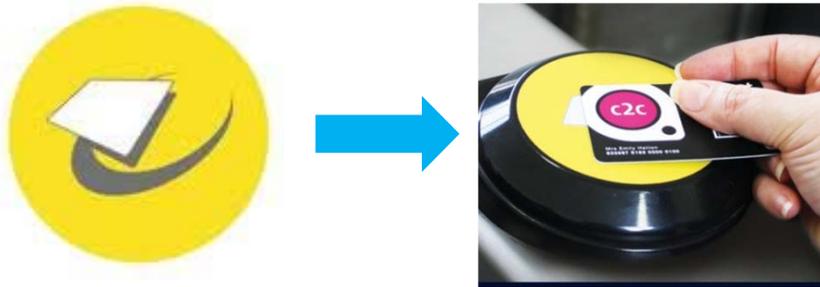
- A few non-users didn't consider it because of other issues
- Lack of awareness they could have a season ticket that includes travel in London
 - Worry they may be less flexible in terms of which stations they can travel to
 - Worry they wouldn't get their railcard discounts

I've seen posters but that was it. I didn't think it was for annual season ticket holders. I thought it was like an Oyster card and you topped it up as and when. [Female, 48, Non-user]

Increasing awareness of a range of products available with the c2c Smartcard and how it's suited to different passengers in terms of their frequency of travel may help overcome the barriers associated with perceived lack of relevance

Expectations from, and assumptions about, the card

- As previous research on smartcard pilots showed, familiarity with Oyster card often informs passengers' expectations of new smartcards



I thought it might be like an Oyster card I thought you add money to it and if you have enough for that journey you can just go. [Female, 59, D, Frequent]

- A few passengers even thought/hoped Oyster was being extended when they saw the barriers being installed
- All knew you would tap in/out
 - However, when using ticket machines, a few non-users didn't know they needed to tap for the second time at the end to upload their purchase
- Some assume and hope they would be able to upload money and travel flexibly on a PAYG basis

Passengers who travel less than daily are the ones who are more commonly frustrated by not having a PAYG option while this does not affect many season ticket holders

Application process (1)

The application process was quick and easy, the whole thing worked well. [Male, 28, Non-user, Weekly and Daily tickets]

- **Both qualitative and quantitative data suggest passengers found the overall application process easy (if they didn't struggle with the photo upload)**

What worked well

The application was all very straight forward, they have most of your details anyway. It didn't take much effort, it wasn't long! [Male, 40, User, Annual Season Ticket]

- Passengers who didn't experience difficulties with uploading the photo, generally thought the online application process was straightforward and quick
- Most passengers were also satisfied with the speed of receiving their card

73% c2c card users thought it was easy to understand how to apply for the card

71% c2c card users thought it was easy to apply for the card

20% users received the card in 1-3 days and 46% in 4-7 days

65% users thought they received their card quickly

Overall, the application process is working well with the exception of a few very specific issues some passengers have struggled with

Q3a. How easy or difficult was it to understand how to apply for a c2c card? Base: All respondents (620)

Q3b. How easy or difficult was it to apply for your c2c card? Base: All respondents (620)

Q5. About how long did it take for the card to arrive from when you applied? Base: All respondents (620)

Q6. How would you rate the speed of your c2c smartcard arriving after you applied for it? Base: All respondents (620)

Application process (2)

I did struggle a bit loading a suitable photograph up. There was a problem with that, whether it was a format issue, re-sizing... I don't know. [Male, 58, User, Weekly season ticket]

- However, qualitative data suggests some experienced difficulties as part of the application process, e.g. with uploading photos, transferring their season tickets and understanding fare options

What worked less well

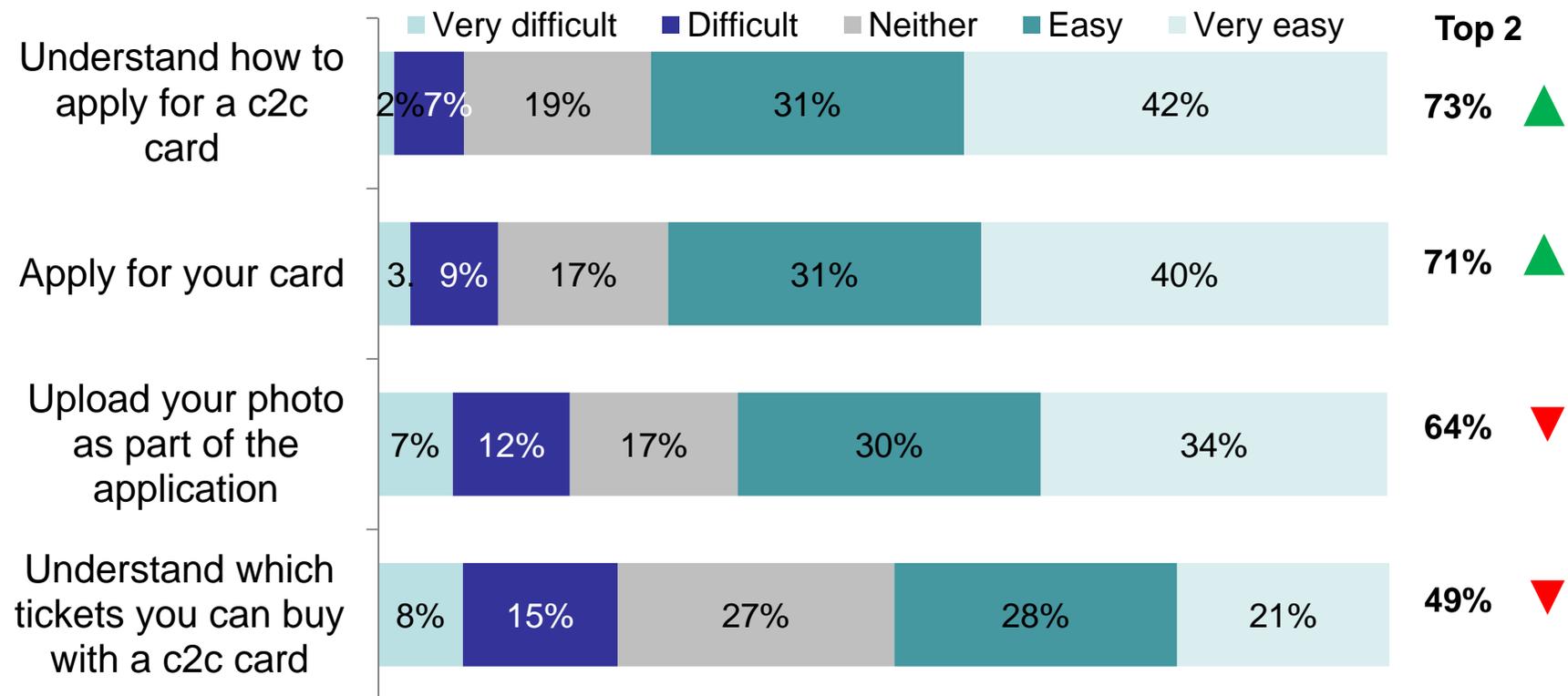
They say you can have up to five tickets but you can't? [Male, 39, User, Weekly and Daily tickets]

- **Photo uploading:**
 - A few reported that 'resize button' didn't work in their case to get the photo to be the right size
- **Transferring annual season tickets:**
 - Some annual season ticket holders reported ticket office staff wasn't always sure what to do and a few had to wait for their cards for weeks
- **Daily tickets and the smartcard:**
 - Some interested in daily tickets thought information concerning these was insufficient and unclear

That's the first thing I asked them 'How do I transfer my ticket and how long would that take?' They said it would only take 3-4 days but it took longer, nearly two weeks. [Female, 48, Non-user, Annual season ticket]

Application process (3)

- Quantitative data confirmed that uploading photo and understanding fare options presents difficulties for some passengers*



Some of these issues have been addressed by c2c, e.g. photo uploading. However, other issues may require changes to the application in terms of processes or information available

Application process (4)

I tried going to the machine, I tried going to the ticket office. You cannot buy dailies in advance. I spoke to them on the phone. I spent so many hours on the internet trying to do it. I am telling you I can't find a way to do it... [Male, 58, User, Weekly and Daily tickets]

- Those who encountered difficulties thought more information on specific issues as well as certain changes to the process would help

Information needs

It said 'if you have trouble downsizing, press downsizing. I've done it and it just took me completely off it. I had to get back into it again and start again... about ten times. [Female, 59, Non-user, Daily tickets]

- Passengers wanted more information and clearer instructions on the following:
 - **Daily tickets**, e.g. If you buy daily tickets, can you use them whenever? How can you buy daily tickets? Can you buy them in advance?
 - **Photo upload**, e.g. Why can't some photos be resized?
 - **Transferring/renewing annual season tickets**, e.g. How long will it take? Can I pay by company cheque?
 - **Protection**, e.g. Can you prove you have the ticket if you lose the card/if the card is not working?

The information fell short on explaining how you'd get your season ticket onto the card. [Male, 40, User, Annual Season Ticket]

While passengers wanted more information on various questions raised above, the group most in need of clearer information on tickets availability and how they can be bought and used are non-season ticket holders

Application process (5)

- Those who encountered difficulties thought more information on specific issues as well as certain changes to the process would help

Process

If people could take a photo to the ticket office that would be easy. [Male, 60, User, Annual season ticket]

- Some made suggestions passengers should be able to bring their photo to be uploaded at the ticket office
- Annual season ticket holders wanted their ticket to be transferred automatically when they apply for the card

Staff respondents explained that in response to issues with photo uploading, c2c has adapted their application process to allow those passengers to apply at the ticket office too

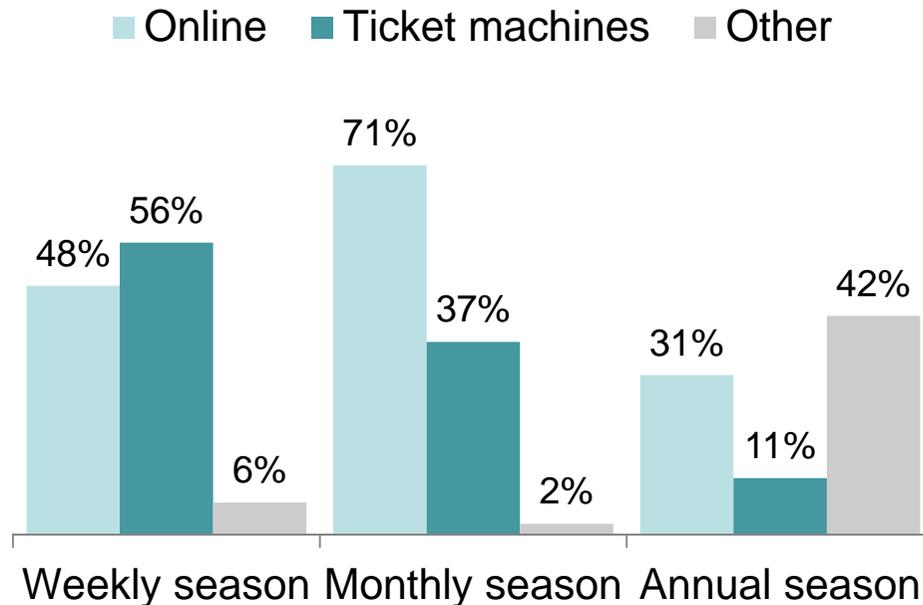
You should be able to transfer or renew your season ticket seamlessly without having to involve another member of staff. If they can take the data from the head office and put it on the card so all you have to do is get your card and off you go, that would make things easier. [Male, 44, User, Annual season ticket]

While those encountering issues with photo uploading are likely to welcome having access to help at the ticket office, many season ticket holders would also be likely to welcome being able to complete the application process and transfer on their own without having to use the ticket office

Buying tickets (1)

I tried buying daily tickets online but gave up on buying them altogether. I now buy only weeklies for my c2c smartcard and on ticket machines. [Male, 39, User, Weekly and Daily tickets]

- There is a mix of behaviours in terms of the ways of buying tickets among season ticket holders



Other tickets

- 83.3% of those with non-season tickets buy them using ticket machines (no facility to buy these tickets online yet)

I save it as a favourite, which is a weekly. Once you set it up then next time you just tell it the date you want it to be effective from. [Male, 58, User, Weekly ticket]

Passengers like having this choice of different ways of buying tickets but currently not all groups of passengers have this choice, i.e. daily ticket buyers and also season ticket holders paying by cheque

Buying tickets (2)

- **Most season ticket holders in our qualitative sample found buying tickets easy but there was some variation depending on the frequency of buying tickets**

Season tickets

I am very pleased, it happened so quickly. I thought it would take some time but within 6 days I had my working smart card. [Male, 60, User, Annual season ticket]

- Getting season tickets onto the smartcard perceived as 'low effort' for most:
 - For some, no work involved as they already had a paper ticket staff transferred to their card
 - Others who bought their season tickets themselves had mixed experiences with weekly season ticket holders more likely to complain of the complex online purchase as they have to do it more frequently

It explained it [season ticket transfer] to you. Fill out the form and take it to your ticket office. [Male, 60, User, Annual season ticket]

It's complicated buying tickets online so I buy mine at ticket machines. [Male, 39, User, Weekly and Daily tickets]

The more frequently passengers have to buy tickets online the more they want a simpler process. Monthly and annual season ticket holders conversely feel less affected by the ease/complexity of the online process

Buying tickets (3)

If can't use it to buy daily tickets there's no need for me to use it. If I could do that I would be using it so I could charge it up in advance [Male, 48, User, Daily tickets]

- **However, qualitative research also revealed passenger disappointment about not being able to buy daily tickets online but only using ticket machines**

Daily tickets

Some station staff also reported they had a few leisure passengers returning their smartcards as they felt they can't use them

- Passengers wanting to buy daily tickets are frustrated:
 - Initially, most weren't aware they couldn't buy them online so wasted time trying to do it only to give up
 - Disappointed they can only buy them on the day using ticket machines
 - Unsure if they can buy them in advance or not and whether and how they can have 5 tickets on the card
- Some therefore gave up buying daily tickets for their smartcards

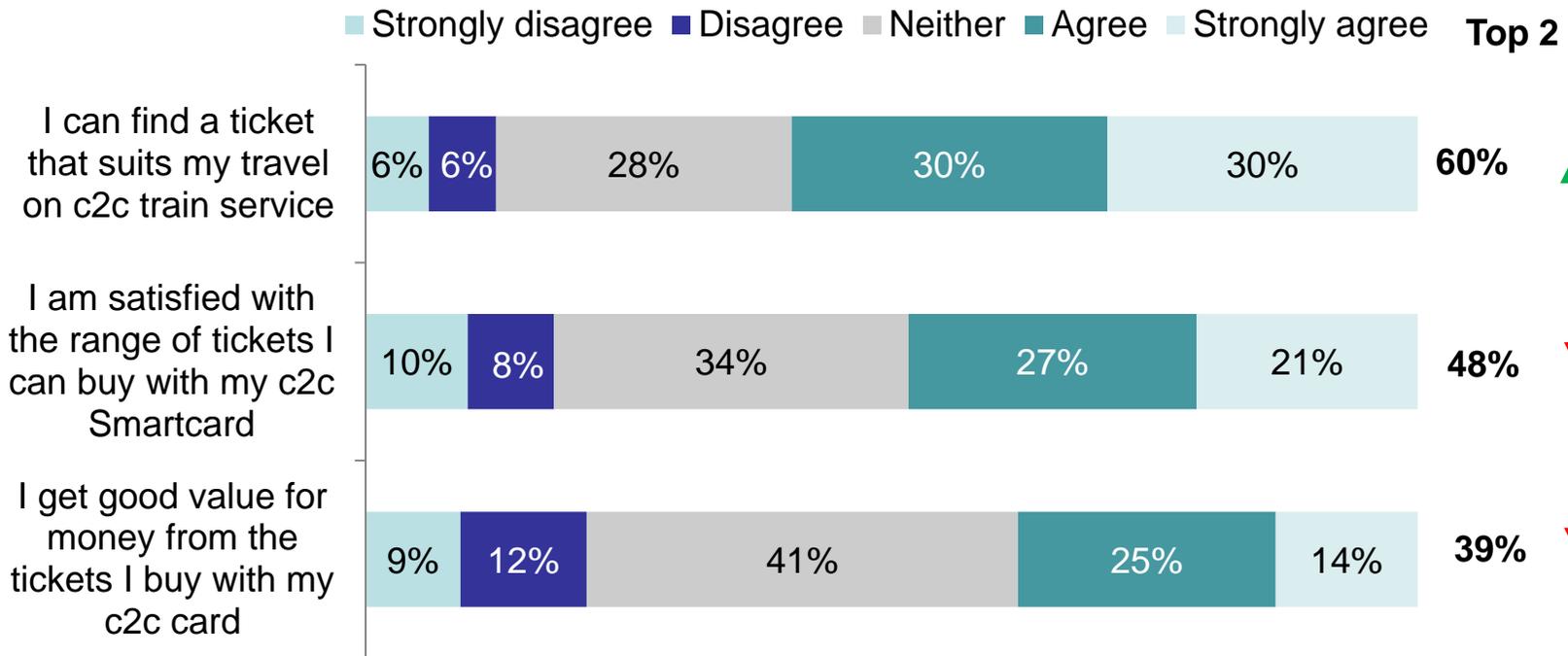
It says buy tickets at the ticket machine or online, well I went online and I just couldn't figure out how to do it! [Female, 56, User, Daily tickets]

At the moment, the c2c Smartcard doesn't meet the needs of these passengers well but clearer information on how the card works for non-season tickets would save time to passengers and manage their expectations

Buying tickets (4)

I'm assuming you can get everything you could get on regular tickets! I'm assuming though because I haven't had a need to buy anything other than daily and I've since given up doing that! [Female, 56, User, Daily Returns]

- **Frustrations related to daily tickets may explain the significant difference between card user satisfaction with the range of tickets available on c2c route in general and those they can buy with their smartcard**



Q17. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Base: All respondents (620)

- I am satisfied with the range of tickets I can buy with my c2c smartcard
- I can find a ticket that suits my travel on c2c train service
- I get good value for money from the tickets I buy with my c2c card

Buying tickets (5)

- In addition to wanting single and return tickets to be available to purchase in advance via the c2c website, some passengers in the qualitative sample made further suggestions regarding the range of tickets available with the smartcard

Railcards

- Disabled passengers and students in the intercept and depth samples expected to be able to use their railcard discounts with the smartcard

Does it do a discount for the disabled? [Female, 28, Non-user, Daily tickets]

Travel in London

- Except for 1 respondent, season ticket holders in the depth sample weren't aware they could add Zones 1-6 to their smartcard
- Some non-users became interested in using the card once they knew about this

If I go to London it makes more sense to get a travel card money wise. But if they could make it so you could use the underground then I'd prefer to do that on my smartcard too. [Male, 45, User, Daily tickets]

There is a potential to make the smartcard more relevant to additional groups of passengers by enabling the card to be used in conjunction with railcards. Also, raising awareness about the possibilities to use the card for travel in London may attract some new passengers to it

Buying tickets (6)

That was straightforward enough apart from the fact you can't buy from anywhere other than the station that you're at. [Female, 55, Non-user, Monthly season ticket]

- In terms of buying tickets using ticket machines, data suggests passengers are generally satisfied with how the process works when that is their choice rather than only option

Ticket machines

The actual ticket machines are great, there's clear instructions and its a simpler process than buying paper tickets on the machines [Male, 48, User, Daily tickets]

- Passengers who've used ticket machines to buy tickets generally found the process easy with only a few complaining it involved too many steps and wasn't straightforward enough
- Some pointed out stations where the machines could be more accessible, e.g. Fenchurch Street
- A few complained about restrictions in terms of which tickets can be bought, i.e. station where tickets are bought is the only possible departure point

65% of all card users who buy tickets using ticket machines find this easy

14% find buying tickets in this way difficult

Passenger experience of using ticket machines may be further improved if they are easily accessible, e.g. located in the main concourse

Using the card at the gates (1)

- Both quantitative and qualitative data suggest that most card users have found using the card at the gates easy



You just put it on the reader and the gate opens! Well chuffed!
[Male, 60, User, Daily tickets]

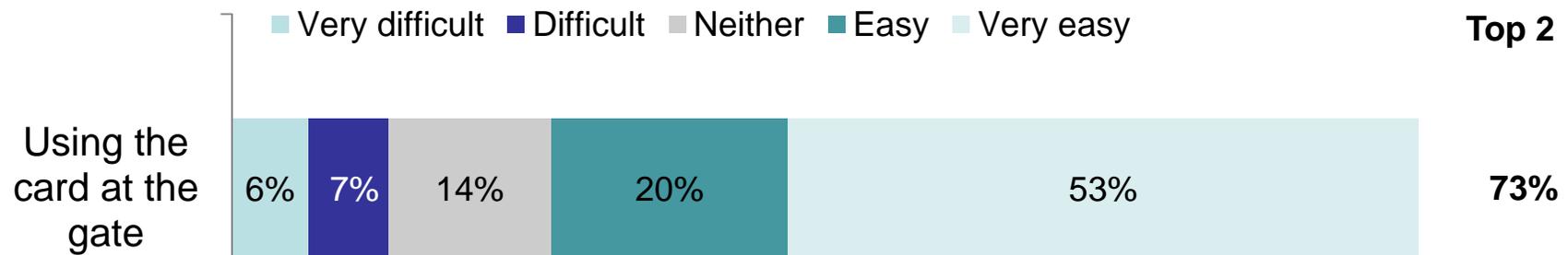
- Passengers in the qualitative sample generally thought using the card at the gate was **quick and easy**
 - Some liked they didn't have to take their wallet out and look for the ticket when at the gate
- Some enjoyed not having to use paper tickets anymore as they get creased and stop working

It's been fine, there hasn't been any problems at all using the card! The benefits I expected are certainly true, it's sturdier, it doesn't get battered up like the paper tickets and it has made getting through the barriers quicker [Male, 40, User, Annual Season Ticket]

If the card is working, most passengers love the speed and ease of using it at the gates

Using the card at the gates (2)

- Both quantitative and qualitative data suggest that most card users have found using the card at the gates easy



The only slight thing on the odd occasion is that not all of the barriers recognise the cards but I've kind of learned which ones they are and just avoid them [Male, 28, User, Annual Season Ticket]

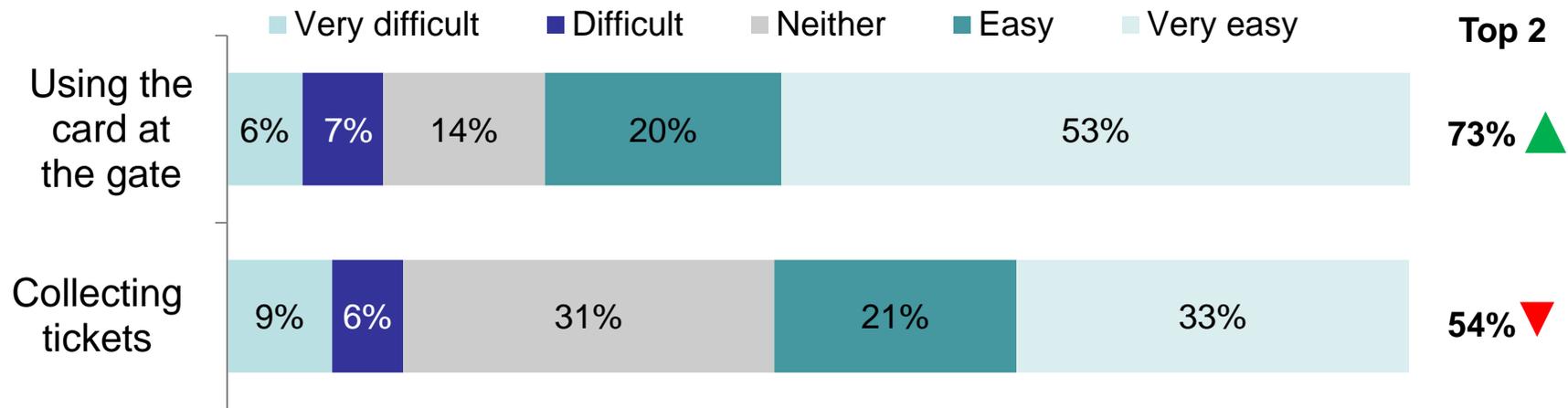
The gates open so there is no problem at all. [Male, 60, User, Annual season ticket]

Data suggests the majority of passengers haven't experienced significant issues with using their card at the gate

Using the card at the gates (3)

They send me an e-mail which I keep and in the morning I don't even have to go to the station, as I tap in it loads onto it. [Male, 58, User, Weekly ticket]

- However, significantly fewer card users found collecting the tickets easy



We did have problems with the readers at the gates. People still can't upload their tickets at the readers. They have to do it at the machine. [c2c Staff Respondent 4]

Research suggests that some of those who find collecting tickets difficult feel that way because they can't collect them at the gates yet but have to queue to collect them at ticket machines

Q13a. How easy or difficult do you find using your c2c smartcard at the gate? Base: All respondents (620)
 Q13b. How easy or difficult do you find collecting the tickets you bought onto your c2c smartcard? Base: All respondents (620)

Using the card at the gates (4)

- **Qualitative interviews highlighted passengers' frustrations regarding the process of collecting their tickets**



Station staff also commented that Monday mornings are 'carnage' when many come with new tickets

- Those who had to purchase tickets on a more frequent basis, e.g. weekly season ticket holders, felt frustrated they could not load their tickets when they tapped at the gate but instead had to queue to collect their ticket using ticket machine
 - Having to queue to collect their tickets rather than just tap in and go felt to defeat the purpose of smart ticketing, i.e. saving time

It says in the leaflet you get with the card that the ticket is loaded at the gate. But it doesn't load, you have to wait at the ticket machine! [Male, 39, User, Weekly and Daily tickets]

Enabling passengers to collect their tickets at the gates would improve their experience greatly as saving time is seen as a major benefit of a smartcard and is expected of it

Using the card at the gates (5)

Just the odd barrier that doesn't work is the only other thing [Male, 28, User, Annual Season Ticket]

- **Answers to the open ended question in the quantitative survey further shed some light concerning other issues some passengers had with using their ticket at the gate**

Gate issues

Staff thought gate issues were largely due to duplicate tickets, not holding the card long enough on the reader and very rarely faulty cards

- Some card users complained about card working at some barriers but not others
- There were also some complaints regarding delayed uploading of purchases by the system
- A few cyclists among card users highlighted the need to install card readers at bicycle/pram/luggage gates

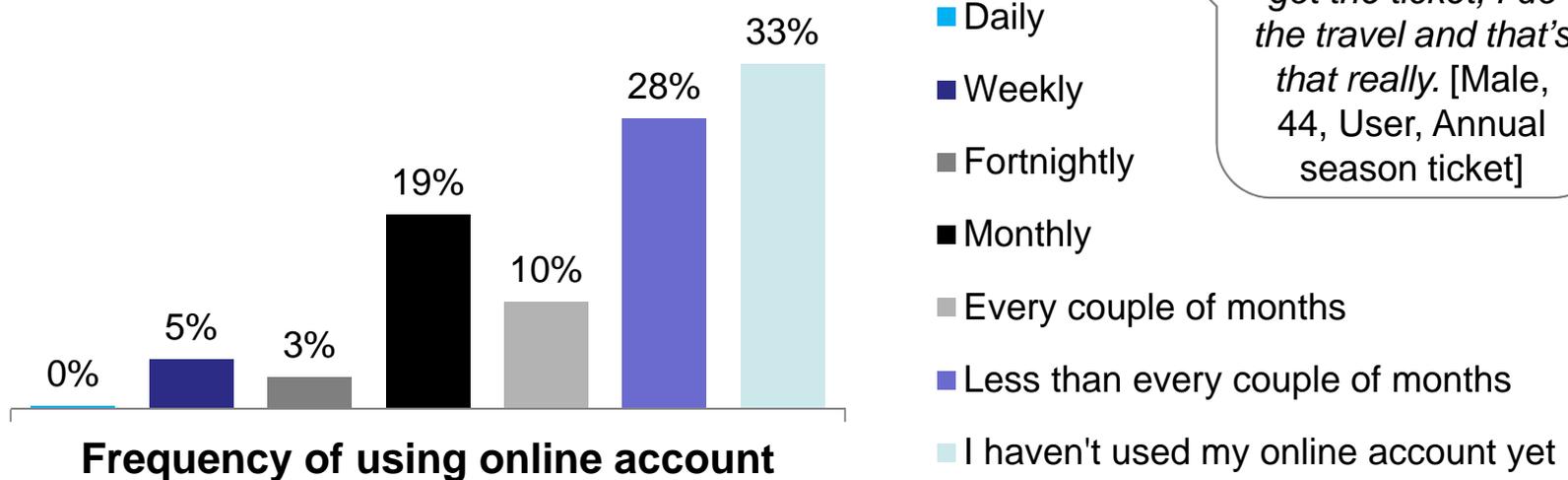
I stopped using my smartcard as I had to wait 5 days for the system to upload my purchase. I had to keep going to barriers and bringing proof of purchase so I could exit. Added time to my journey. [User comment from the online survey]

There may be a need for educating passengers more on what they can do to avoid difficulties at the gate but also following up on their observations that some gates aren't working for some cards

Online account (1)

I got really confused and in the end after trying a couple of times I thought bugger this it's easier to use the machines down at the station! [Male, 45, User, Daily tickets]

- **Qualitative data suggests there is little interest in using the online account for anything other than buying tickets and low frequency of usage evident in quantitative data seems to support this***



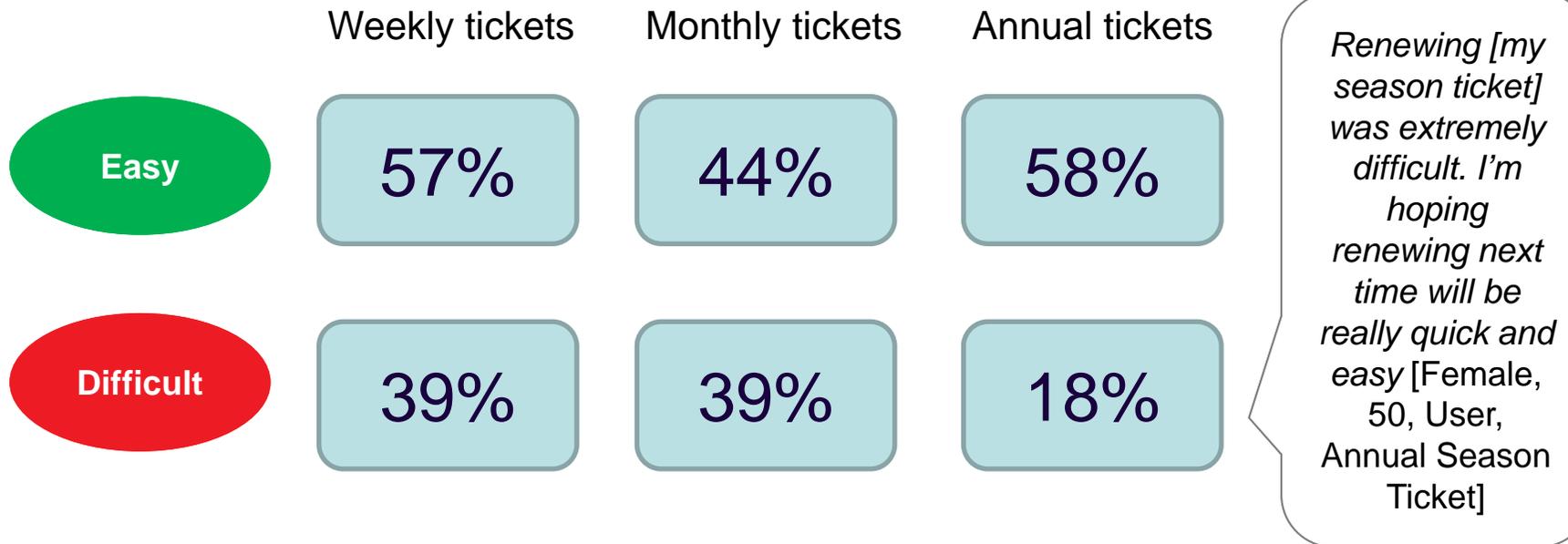
I haven't really felt the need to. I've got the ticket, I do the travel and that's that really. [Male, 44, User, Annual season ticket]

Passengers see the online account for their smartcard in purely functional terms and their main needs from the account are that all the processes are quick and easy

Online account (2)

The website is confusing - too many steps to load my standard ticket onto the card. [User comment from the online survey]

- Both quantitative and qualitative data suggest card users' experiences varied in terms of how easy or difficult they found using their online account to buy tickets

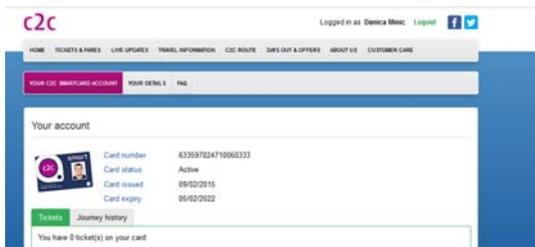


Data suggests a significant proportion of passengers find using the online account difficult

Online account (3)

Having two login portals of : <https://tickets.c2c-online.co.uk/c2c/en/account/Login.aspx> and <https://smart.c2c-online.co.uk/home.faces> is very confusing ! [User comment from the online survey]

- **Qualitative research found that needing to use two accounts in order to buy the tickets – the c2c Smartcard account and another c2c online account – is the main reason why some passengers struggle to buy tickets online for their c2c Smartcard**



Some staff respondents noted passengers were sometimes unaware they bought paper tickets online rather than tickets for their card

- Those card users who reported struggling did not understand there were two online accounts they needed to use in order to buy tickets, i.e. their smartcard account and another c2c online account
 - They thought their c2c Smartcard account was the only account they needed to buy the tickets

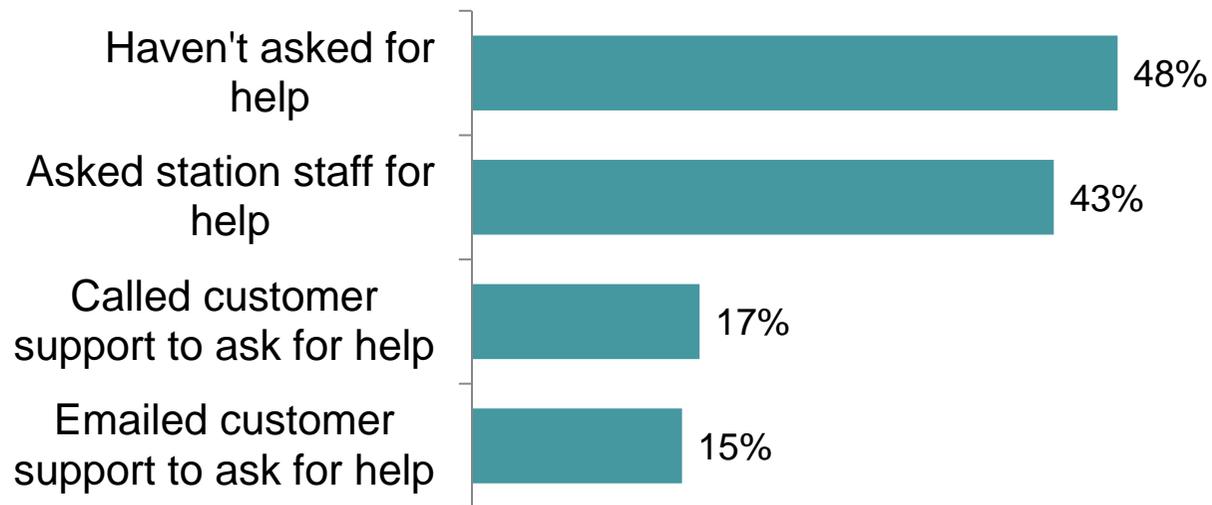
It is very confusing that you have to have an online smartcard account but purchase tickets through a separate online c2c account. I had to google to get other commuters' help before I could work it out. [User comment from the online survey]

Integrating different websites so that passengers need to log in only once into their smartcard account in order to buy tickets is likely to improve purchase experience greatly and allow more people to buy tickets in this way

Need for customer support

The only help I've had to get is with the online thing, I haven't had to seek help at stations!
[Male, 45, User, Daily tickets]

- Card users in our sample were split in terms of whether they asked for help or not with most of those asking for help turning to station staff



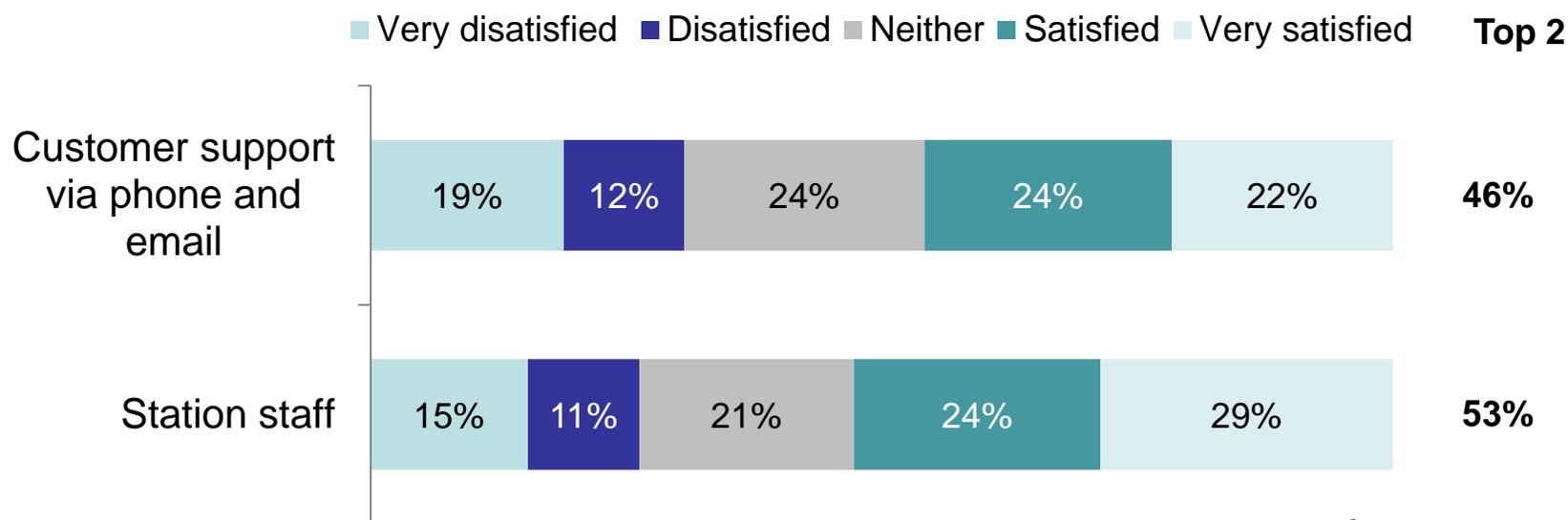
I haven't used customer service, I normally go straight to Twitter! [Male, 40, User, Annual Season Ticket]

52% of card users asked for some form of customer support in total

Data suggests that when passengers struggle with online self-service most tend to turn to station staff as that requires the least effort

Satisfaction with customer support (1)

- Both quantitative and qualitative data suggest passengers' experience in terms of how much customer support staff were able to help has been variable



They aren't very helpful. They seem to know there are issues but it's just a shrug of the shoulders [Female, 56, User, Daily tickets]

My first smart card stopped working. The staff at Pitsea station were very helpful and assisted me greatly in getting a new one issued. Same with the customer services staff...More than happy with c2c. [User comment from the online survey]

Satisfaction with customer support (2)

Staff is always knowledgeable and helpful.
[Male, 44, User, Annual season ticket]

- Both quantitative and qualitative data suggest passengers' experience in terms of how much customer support staff were able to help has been variable



Station staff explained they were instructed to refer passengers to customer relations team for many queries

- Passengers in our qualitative sample reported c2c staff varied in terms of how knowledgeable and helpful they were with regard to smartcard queries/issues
- Those who complained felt station staff often seemed disinterested in the card, sometimes lacking in knowledge, and tended to refer them to the team that deals with online-related queries

The people who I rang up were helpful. When I went into the station and said I was having trouble renewing they weren't overly helpful. They just said you can't do that here and gave me a number... very dismissive, like it's not our problem
[Female, 50, User, Annual Season Ticket]

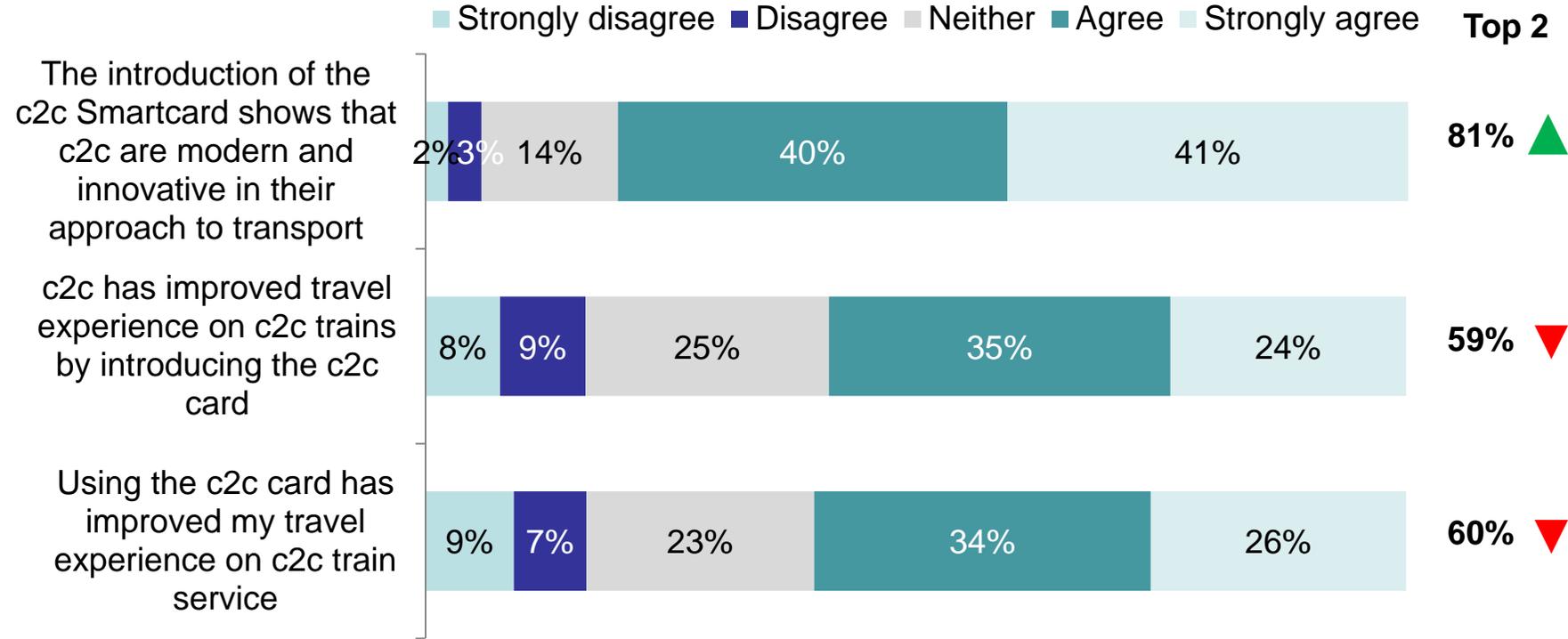
Passengers are unaware that station staff may have been assigned a particular role in customer support regarding the smartcard so expect them to be able to help them with a variety of queries related to the smartcard



5. PASSENGER VIEWS OF THE C2C SMARTCARD

Views on the c2c Smartcard

- Over three quarters of card users associate the smartcard with being modern and innovative and over a half think the card has improved travel experience



Research suggests that on the whole most passengers welcome the introduction of the smartcard

Views on the benefits and drawbacks of the c2c Smartcard

- **Qualitative data further suggests passengers think the c2c card performs well in some areas but could be improved in others**



It would be mainly the amount of time it saves on purchases. It makes it easier. People like easy.
[Male, 28, Non-User]

- More durable than the paper season ticket
- More secure in case it's lost
- Keeping up with technological developments seen as positive by many
- Quicker to use at the gate



Not particularly flexible yet because you can't have all sorts of tickets and you can't do it online yet [Male, 48, User, Daily tickets]

- If the tickets could be collected at the gate this would remove the need for queuing and would be seen as a big benefit



- Daily tickets not available online so passengers interested in those see the card of limited use to them
- Some other ticket types unavailable
- Complicated online purchase
- Not being able to collect tickets at the gate

Expanding the range of tickets available in general and online, as well as allowing passengers to collect tickets at the gate, would make the card beneficial to more passengers and meet their expectations of smartcards to a greater extent

Views on the c2c Smartcard and values of smart ticketing

- When passengers interviewed qualitatively evaluated the c2c Smartcard in terms of the attributes commonly associated with smart ticketing the card was seen to perform well in some respects but not all

Performing poorly

Flexible

- Doesn't work as well for those who travel less than daily
- No PAYG option

Tailored

- Not possible to adapt it to individual travel
- Some feel it would be more tailored if they could use it on underground and other rail lines

Value for Money

- Not cheaper than paper tickets

Simple

- Easy to use at the gate but some struggle with buying tickets online for the smartcard

Leading Edge

- Modern and innovative but there are other smartcards as well as contactless

Performing well

Convenient

- Easy and quick to use (for many season ticket holders)

Secure

- Purchases recorded in the database

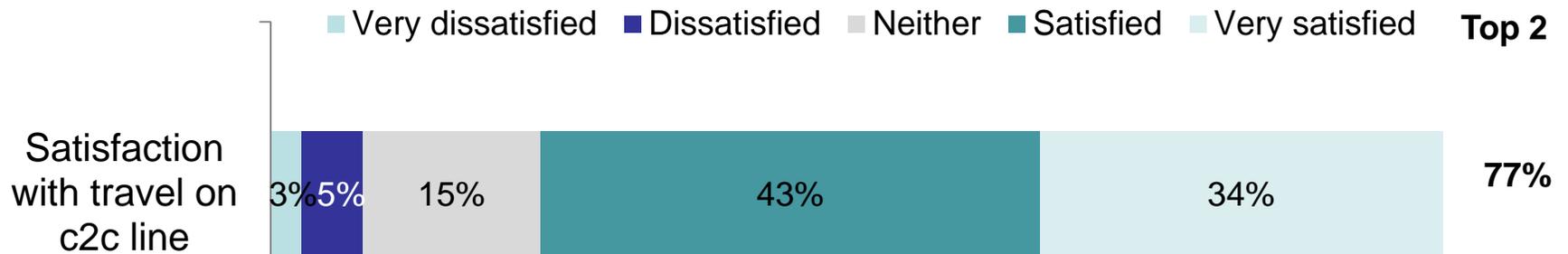
It's a great idea and a great concept, innovative you could say, but it needs to work, it needs to become reliable. It could be brilliant but it's not there yet. [Female, 56, User, Daily tickets]

PAYG and cheaper tickets are further benefits often associated with smartcard so these attributes are likely to be appealing to many

Satisfaction with journeys on c2c line (1)



- Quantitative data suggests most passengers are satisfied with the journeys they normally make on the c2c line



It is the best line in the country. When I first started commuting in the seventies, it was British Rail, it was the worst line in the country; it was known as the misery line. Since c2c got involved it is the best line in the country. We have got new trains... It is the envy of all commuters. It is a very good line. [Male, 58, User, Weekly and Daily tickets]

Satisfaction with journeys on c2c line (2)

- **Qualitative data confirmed this and offered some insight into reasons for satisfaction as well as captured some suggestions for further improvements**



c2c

- Most in our qualitative sample satisfied with the c2c train service
 - Think that trains are modern and punctual
 - See it as much better than it used to be before c2c took over (some say this train service used to be known as ‘misery line’)
 - See it as better than trains on some other local lines
- A few stressed the service would be improved if peak trains had more carriages as they are full now
- One respondent also questioned peak time start, i.e. why 4.30am trains count as peak times

The c2c has not been too bad. They introduced very new trains, my only complaint is that there aren't enough carriages in peak times. It would be nice to have more carriages. [Male, 60, User, Annual season ticket]

Data suggests that in many passengers' view, c2c has made a positive difference to their travel experience since they took over this rail line



6. C2C STAFF EXPERIENCES AND VIEWS

Staff views before the introduction of the smartcard (1)

- **Most c2c staff in our sample thought smartcards had the potential to benefit passengers and rail companies alike**

Benefits for passengers

- Not having to replace paper season tickets which get worn out and stop working
- Better protection in case season tickets are lost
- Easy and convenient travel experience
- Potential to save time – no/less queuing
- Potential for flexibility, e.g. new, tailored products for part-time workers, young people

It has made their life a little bit easier. They don't have to worry about the paper card stopping working. [c2c Staff Respondent 2]

Benefits for c2c

- Ability to track travel patterns
- Ability to access data on individual journeys to help with customer queries/complaints
- Potential for cost saving through online self-service
- Keeping up with technology – positive impact on brand perception

When it is working fully I think it is going to be a good thing because we will be able to see where people have travelled and that helps us to deal with inquiries. [c2c Staff Respondent 12]

Perceived benefits coupled with the desire to keep on track with technological developments underlie the rationale for introducing the smartcard

Staff views before the introduction of the smartcard (2)

- However, depending on their job role, staff respondents also voiced concerns they had or challenges they anticipated in the run up to the smartcard launch

Managers

Managing their expectations as to what we can deliver. Introducing it perhaps as part of something larger. [c2c Staff Respondent 12]

- Concerns over passengers' expectations based on their experience with the Oyster card
 - Whether passengers will be disappointed there is no PAYG option
 - How to make the c2c Smartcard appealing to those travelling within the Oyster zone only
- Concerns over potential issues with the online self-service approach
 - Whether passengers will want and expect support from station-based staff
- Challenges regarding the smartcard promotion
 - How to capture attention of those passengers who don't read station posters and listen to station announcements

I can see that our product has developmental problems; it is not developing as fast as we hoped it would be. The customers would also like it to have a pay as you go function which is not on there at the moment. [c2c Staff Respondent 10]

Managing customers' expectations based on Oyster and finding the right balance between online self-service and customer support were some challenges anticipated before the launch

Staff views before the introduction of the smartcard (3)

- However, depending on their job role, staff respondents also voiced concerns they had or challenges they anticipated in the run up to the smartcard launch

Station staff

People very much like to see someone.
[c2c Staff Respondent 6]

- Concerns over the impact of the smartcard on station staff jobs
 - Whether staff numbers would be reduced as a result
 - E.g. posters saying ‘Kiss goodbye to paper tickets’ understood as ‘Kiss goodbye to your job’
- Concerns over the online-only approach – staff anticipated passengers will ask them for help

There was a particular poster that was introduced. It said ‘kiss goodbye to paper tickets’. A lot of the staff looked at that and thought basically ‘kiss goodbye to my job’. Staff looked at it on a negative basis. They took those posters down. [c2c Staff Respondent 4]

c2c experience suggests that managing staff relations is likely to be an important consideration for rail companies as they start introducing smartcards

Staff feedback on pre-launch training (1)

- **Most customer-facing staff were satisfied with the practical aspects of the training they received but some questioned the timing of training sessions**

Training staff

I've been fairly confident with the system, I've been around CMS, we had a couple of days of training. [c2c Staff Respondent 11]

- Most found the practical training in using CMS most useful as well as going through relevant scenarios, e.g. how to use CMS to cancel a card
 - However, not everyone received practical training to the same extent or at all
- Some however felt they received their training too early before the launch as well as received the manual too late
 - They acknowledged training needed to start early because of the number of staff that had to be trained but thought refresher sessions weren't carried out sufficiently

Poor. Very poor. For such an important thing c2c trying to sell to customers. By the time it came in, what we learnt we forgot because we haven't implemented any of it. [c2c Staff Respondent 6]

Smaller classes and more time practising using new technology is likely to be most beneficial. The timing is also important – the staff need to feel confident in their knowledge before the launch but learn that relatively close to the launch

Staff feedback on pre-launch training (2)

- **Station staff also pointed out some gaps in what was covered in the training they received**

Training staff

If anybody has any issues, we just forward it to the support team and they then would be able to look into it, we take their contact details.
[c2c Staff Respondent 2]

- Station staff thought the training should have explained all the relevant processes customers could need help with rather than only those planned to be covered by station staff
 - Staff reported that the training covered processes planned to be covered by station staff, but it did not cover sufficiently or at all online-based processes that station staff weren't planned to help with but rather to refer passengers to customer relations team
 - Staff however anticipated passengers will ask them for help with online processes too so felt unprepared to answer those questions

I didn't have any knowledge of how to solve certain problems. That was the way that we were trained. Obviously we were not taught the technical side of it, we were just taught how to promote and sell them. [c2c Staff Respondent 5]

Station staff felt the training should have prepared them to answer a wider range of passenger queries rather than limit their role

Staff experiences of the pilot (1)

- **Staff respondents further highlighted the following positive aspects of the c2c Smartcard introduction, as well as of their experience of the pilot**

What worked well

We're quite lucky, we've got one of the managers who was very much involved, she is quite knowledgeable. We've now got manuals. [c2c Staff Respondent 6]

- All staff thought that the smartcard has benefited season ticket holders and that it works well for them
- Some highlighted the efficient promotion of the smartcard among season ticket holders as they were particularly targeted by emails and ticket office staff too
- Staff further felt positive about the support they received from each other and their managers during the pilot
- Some staff were also positive about the pilot process as a learning experience where solutions are developed in response to unanticipated issues

When they first started receiving their smartcard, they were very, very pleased. These were only people with season tickets. [c2c Staff Respondent 10]

Staff experiences of the pilot (2)

- **Staff also identified those aspects of the pilot where they felt the technology behind the card currently lagged behind their and passengers' expectations**

What worked less well

Online tuition! Simplify that whole process as much as you can! People need things to be quick and easy [c2c Staff Respondent 13]

- Staff stressed the card does not work well for passengers without season tickets, e.g. they can't buy daily tickets online and in advance
- Some further wondered if issues with dailies / uploading of products would have been identified earlier had the products been tested before the card was introduced rather than testing blank cards only
- A few staff respondents also pointed out the need to simplify the online purchase process, i.e. not have two online accounts
- Some further felt the CMS system was not user friendly, e.g. difficult to find relevant information as too much information comes up

You can't buy normal daily travels on your phone. You still have to go to a booking office to use a machine to buy a ticket. Unless you have an annual or monthly season ticket, smartcard is irrelevant. [c2c Staff Respondent 5]

Staff believed however that the card had the potential to benefit other groups of passengers as technology gets improved to allow for more products, choice, ease and flexibility

Staff experiences of the pilot (3)

- **Station staff further felt frustrated about limitations to their role within the pilot and that they weren't able to provide customer support passengers expected**

Station staff role

It is very frustrating. All we can do is check the card, see what's on it, if there is a problem, they have to wait. We can't do anything right there for them.
[c2c Staff Respondent 5]

- Station staff explained they were instructed to refer customers to the customer relations team for most smartcard queries
 - With the exception of helping with ticket machines, cancelling lost cards, and sending paper season tickets to the office when they need to be transferred to the smartcard
- At the same time, they had their reservations about the online self-service approach and expected passengers will ask them for support too

We were not much use to the people because we had to refer them back to another office. We refer them back online or through to customer services. We are limited in what we can do in the office and provide support for them. [c2c Staff Respondent 4]

Staff experiences of the pilot (4)

- **Station staff further felt frustrated about limitations to their role within the pilot and that they weren't able to provide customer support passengers expected**

Station staff role

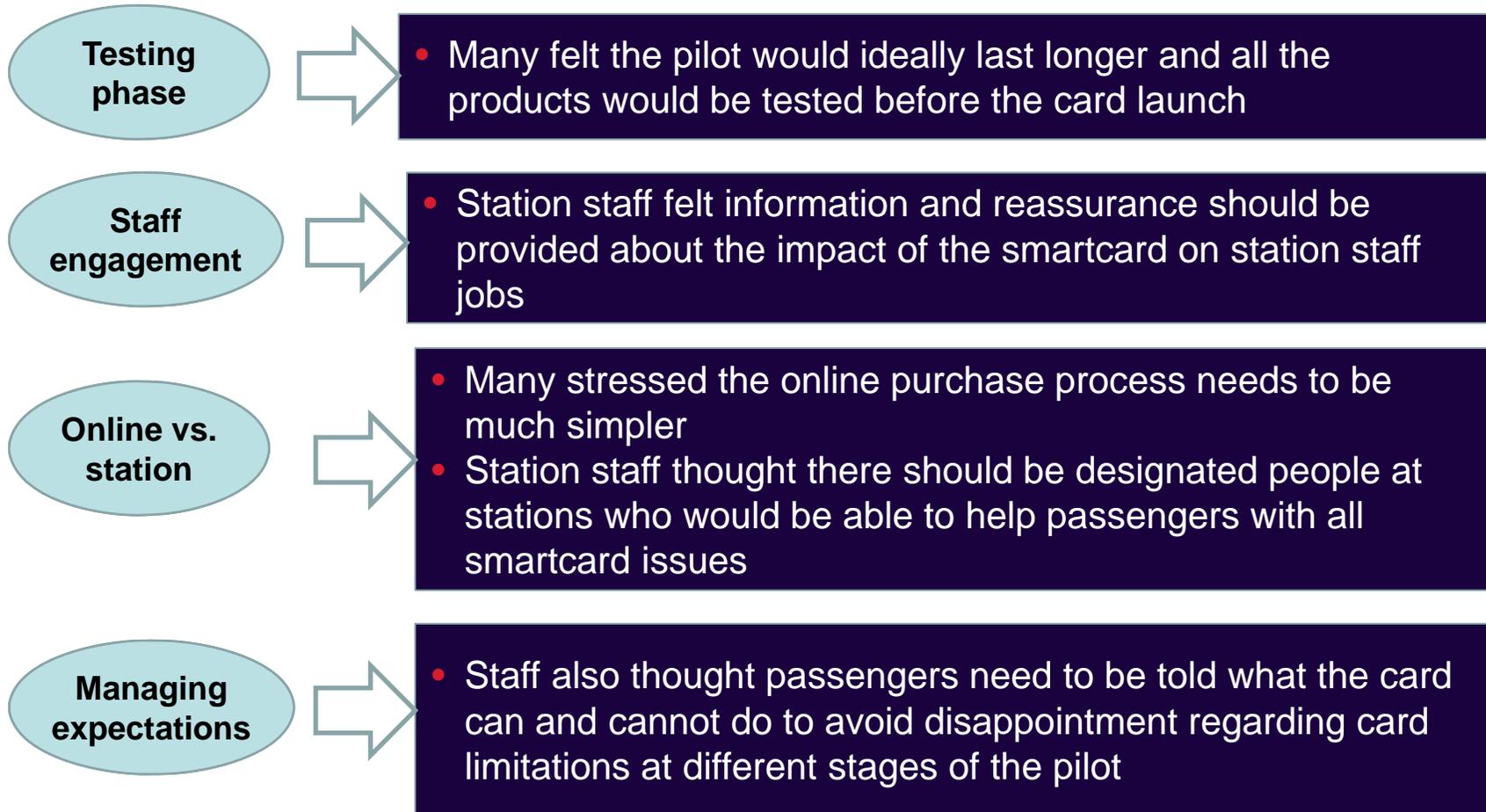
If they've got a negative feeling they think that the smartcard is going to take their jobs away. They [company] said on multiple occasions that there are no job losses down to the smartcard. [c2c Staff Respondent 10]

- According to station staff, when the card was launched, passengers repeatedly approached them for support and staff felt frustrated they could not provide this
 - They were also concerned this left the impression the staff weren't trained enough or didn't want to help
- The online-only approach caused some discord between station staff and managers involved with the smartcard too
 - Station staff felt managers underestimated passengers' support needs and were frustrated they weren't consulted in this regard
 - Some managers wondered if some station staff promoted the smartcard less as they were worried about its impact on their jobs
 - Station staff further wanted their job concerns to be addressed and reassurance to be provided

Station staff want to be consulted with regard to the impact of online self-service on passengers and think passengers need to be able to receive broader smartcard-related customer support at stations too

Learning from the pilot

- Staff respondents felt the following lessons from their experience of the pilot may be useful when smartcards are introduced elsewhere





7. CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions 1

Research suggests passengers on the c2c train service welcome the introduction of the smartcard but are split in terms of their views in terms of how well the card meets their needs now

Season ticket holders are largely satisfied with the card and appreciate its benefits

- Ease of use at the gates, durability and better protection

Passengers interested in other tickets feel the card currently does not meet their needs as much as they expected

- This is primarily because they can't buy all the tickets or because they can't buy daily tickets online

Certain technical issues are also causing difficulties for some passengers and resolving them is likely to make the card more beneficial

- Two main issues that need addressing include: not being able to collect tickets at the gates and a complicated online purchase process (e.g. having two online accounts)

Conclusions 2

c2c staff in our sample believed smartcards had the potential to benefit both passengers and rail companies but depending on their roles they had some differences of opinion too

Staff were positive about a variety of benefits of the smartcard

- They highlighted the benefits for passengers such as ease, convenience, saving time, flexibility, durability, protection
- They were aware the card delivered some of these benefits more than others but also hoped the technology would develop to deliver all

Customer-facing staff reported they felt well prepared in some ways but not in other ways for the introduction of the card

- Many were satisfied with the practical part of the training but station staff questioned why their training did not cover all the processes associated with the smartcard but only those they were supposed to assist with

Some staff further questioned the move towards online self-service on the whole, and the limited role in customer support station staff were given

- In their view and experience passengers expect and ask station staff to assist them with smartcard issues too so they felt frustrated they weren't able to give this assistance

Conclusions 3

- **This research also highlighted certain challenges that can be encountered during smartcard pilots more generally**

Communication challenges

- The potential gap between passengers' expectations from smartcards (often based on Oyster) and technology that is still being developed
- Difficulties with promoting the smartcard in the context of the pilot when the card and system capabilities may be changing as they are being tested, improved and developed
- Difficulties with promoting the card because of the assumptions among those who travel less than daily or a few times a week that the smartcard is for more frequent travellers

Conclusions 4

- **This research also highlighted certain challenges that can be encountered during smartcard pilots more generally**



**Other
challenges**

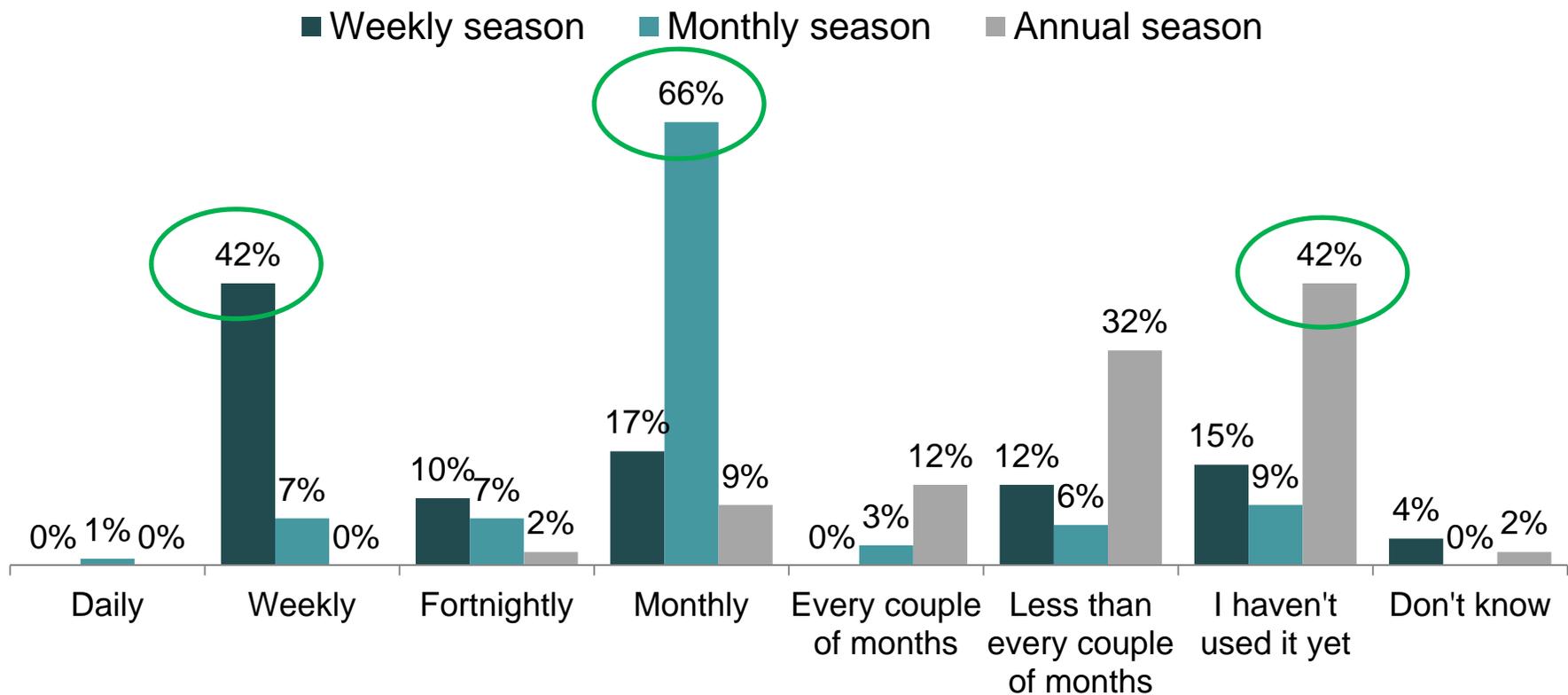
- The need to find the right balance between the online self-service approach and direct customer support
- The need to inform and reassure staff about the potential impact of the smartcard on their jobs and consult them in the pilot process
- The need to integrate the already existing company website and payment mechanisms with the new smartcard online account
- The need to solve technical problems making the collection of tickets a problem area for some passengers



APPENDIX

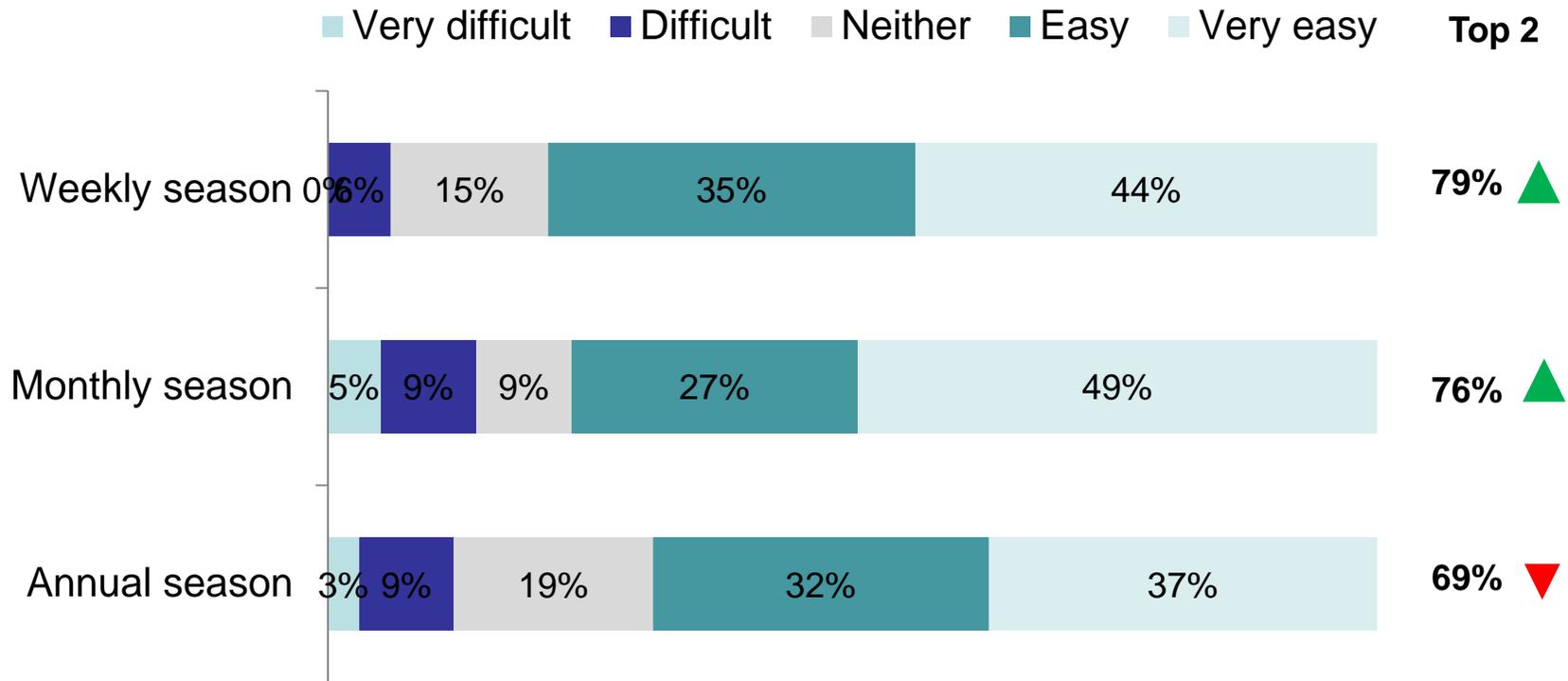
Online account usage: Breakdown by ticket type

- Quantitative data confirms findings from qualitative research that the frequency of buying tickets drives the frequency of logging into the account for many



Applying for the c2c Smartcard: Breakdown by ticket type

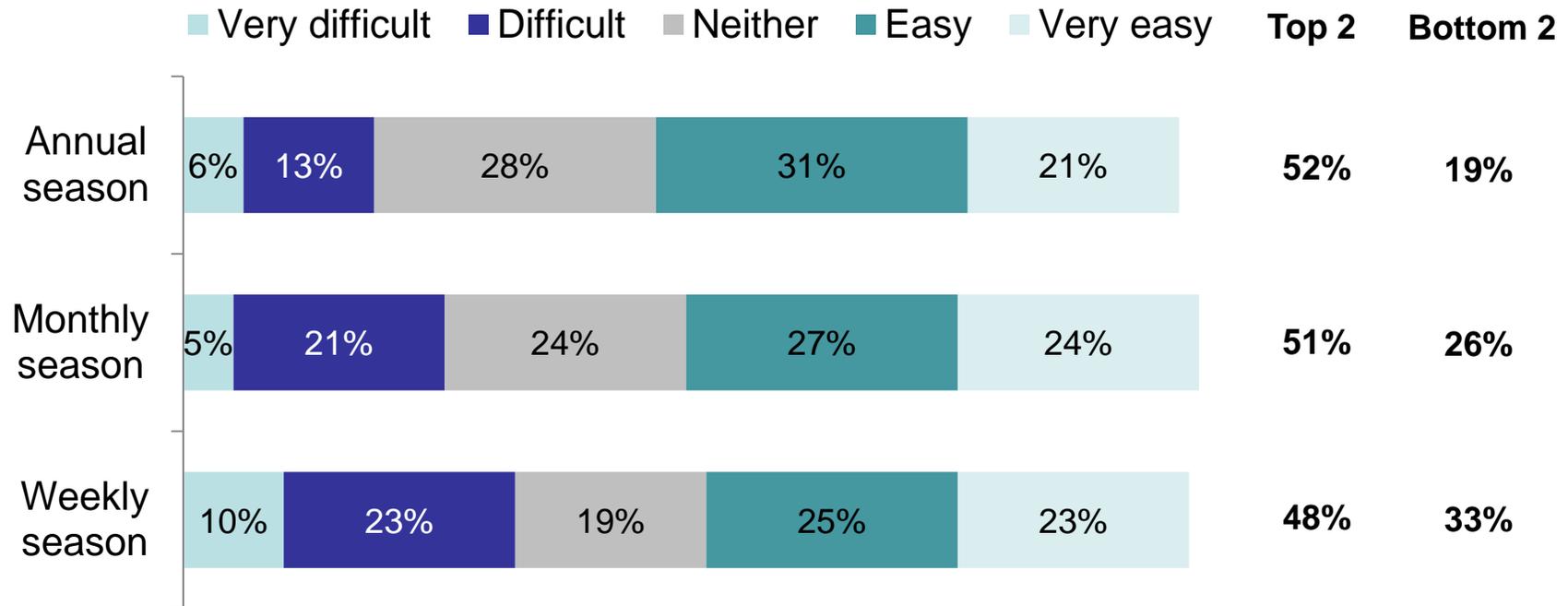
- Quantitative data confirms the qualitative findings that the application process may not have been as easy for some annual season ticket holders as for other card users as some had to wait longer for their tickets to be transferred to cards



Q3b. How easy or difficult was it to apply for your c2c card?
 Base for weekly season ticket holders: 48
 Base for monthly season ticket holders: 97
 Base for annual season ticket holders: 423

Understanding what tickets you can buy with the c2c Smartcard: Breakdown by ticket type

- There are no significant differences in this regard but small differences that are there may reflect different levels of interest in understanding which tickets they can buy, e.g. weekly season ticket holders may be more likely to look for information on daily tickets which some may have found difficult



Q3c. How easy or difficult to understand which tickets you can buy with the c2c Smartcard?

Base for weekly season ticket holders: 48

Base for monthly season ticket holders: 97

Base for annual season ticket holders: 423