

Card Expenditure Statistics [CES] – April 2010

Seasonally-adjusted

At a glance key figures for April

	Total spending £ billions		Annual growth rates for spending		Number of purchases millions	
	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009
All plastic cards	34.5	31.6	6.0%	5.1%	700	659
Debit cards	23.7	21.1	8.5%	8.0%	532	491
Credit cards	10.8	10.5	1.2%	-0.2%	168	168

Spending on plastic cards remained strong in April following the record high in March, amounting to £34.5 billion, £1.3 billion below the March total. £23.7 billion was spent on debit cards and £10.8 billion on credit cards. Annual growth rates continued to strengthen (see Chart 1) with total spending growth at 6.0% compared to a low of 3.3% in October 2009. Average transaction values (see Chart 3) increased slightly as the low January figures moved out of the calculation. Within April alone there were only small changes in ATVs with the food & drink sector showing the biggest rises of £0.57 in credit card purchases (to £35.57) and £0.34 in debit card purchases (to £28.18).

There were no significant changes in card spending patterns in either the retail or the services sectors comparing April's figures with March's. Vehicle sales fell back by £356 million following the end of the government's vehicle scrappage scheme, but still showed a strong figure of £2.8 billion. Financial services remained strong at £3.6 billion although there were only a handful of April days for 'last minute' investments in ISAs. Card spending on food & drink nudged up to £6.8 billion, representing 20% of all plastic card purchases. £5.3 billion or 77% of this spending is with debit cards – a higher proportion than the 69% debit card share of all plastic card spending.

The **plastic card share of total retail sales** (including automotive fuels)¹ in April was 67.5% (see Chart 2); in the food & drink sector the share was 60.4%.

¹CES 3-month moving average spending for April of £18.1 billion expressed as a percentage of a similar 3-month moving average for National Statistics 'All retailing including automotive fuel' (AGG 21) based on the value of Retail Sales at current prices (SA) that gives a figure of £26.8 billion.

Chart 1

Spending on plastic cards
Annual growth rates

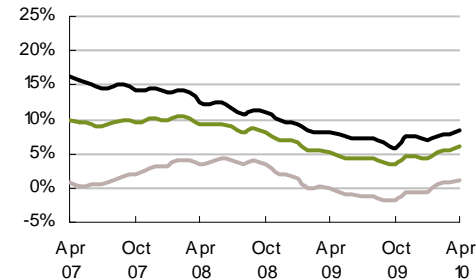


Chart 2

Percent of retail sales made on plastic cards
(including automotive fuel)
Three-month moving average

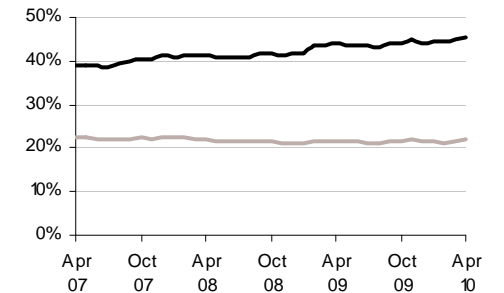


Chart 3

Average transaction values
Three-month moving average

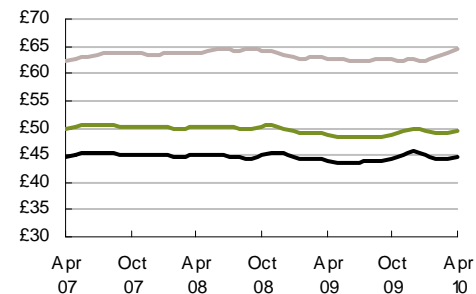
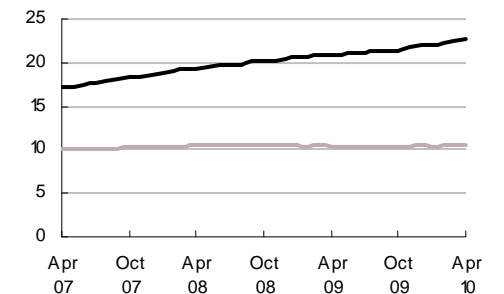


Chart 4

Average monthly expenditure
£ billions



— Debit cards
— Credit cards
— All plastic cards