

Card Expenditure Statistics [CES] – December 2009

Seasonally-adjusted

At a glance key figures for December

	Total spending £ billions		Annual growth rates for spending		Number of purchases millions	
	2009	2008	2009	2008	2009	2008
All plastic cards	34.3	32.1	4.7%	6.8%	685	666
Debit cards	23.6	21.5	7.5%	9.5%	514	495
Credit cards	10.7	10.6	-0.7%	1.9%	171	172

Spending on plastic cards in December was slightly weaker than in November which remains the strongest month of the year for **plastic card spending** mostly due to the inflow of over £1 billion into NS&I bonds paid using debit cards. Total spending in December amounted to £34.3 billion with £23.6 billion (69%) spent on debit cards. There were 685 million purchases, of which 75% were made using debit cards.

December 2009's spending was £2.2 billion higher than December 2008, an increase of 6.8%, with 93% of this increase accounted for by debit cards. However, not too much should be read into this increase due to the factors that depressed spending in December 2008 (VAT reduction, heavy retailer discounting and fall in oil prices). There were 180 million **debit card purchases in supermarkets** amounting to £5.9 billion during December 2009 (not seasonally-adjusted). As is usual for Decembers, this was a record spend and equates to 68 transactions per second amounting to £2,239, night and day throughout the month.

Average transaction values [ATV] continued to strengthen slightly with a strong rise in motoring, reflecting increases in automotive fuels, and smaller rises in household and other retailers. Food & drink and clothing ATVs fell back slightly due to strong price competition over the Christmas period.

The **plastic card share of total retail sales**¹ in December was 65.7%; in the food & drink sector the share was 59.2%

¹CES 3-month moving average spending for December of £15.9 billion expressed as a percentage of a similar 3-month moving average for National Statistics 'All retailing' (EAQV) based on the value of Retail Sales at current prices (SA) that gives a figure of £24.2 billion.

Chart 1

Spending on plastic cards
Annual growth rates

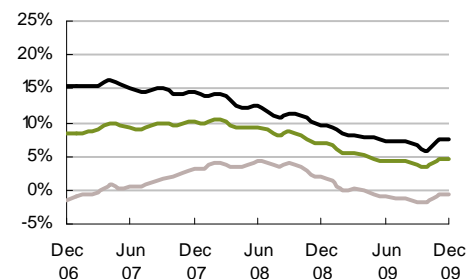


Chart 2

Percent of retail sales made on plastic cards
Three-month moving average

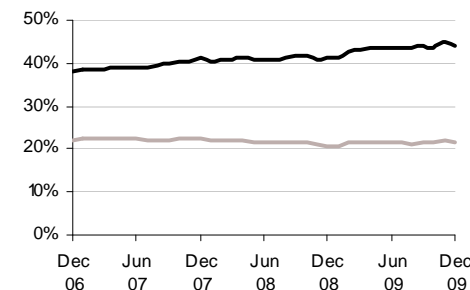


Chart 3

Average transaction values
Three-month moving average

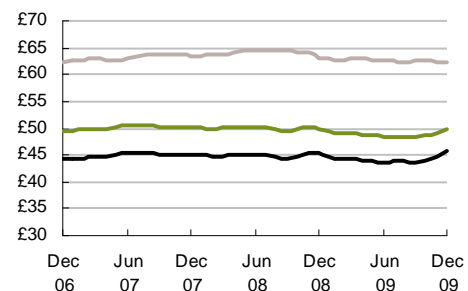
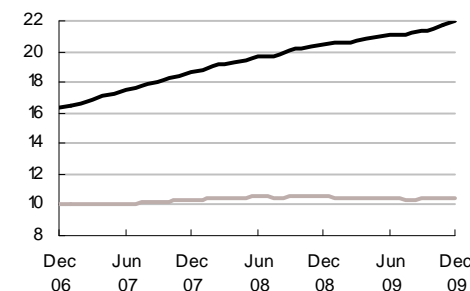


Chart 4

Average monthly expenditure
£ billions



— Debit cards
— Credit cards
— All plastic cards