

News release



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Big high street names switch on to chip and PIN trial

***- new style debit and credit cards now number 181,500 in Northampton;
600 retailers now in trial -***

***- New research shows eighty per cent saying signatures are easy to
forge; seventy per cent say PINs are more secure -***

You can now buy just about anything you want with a chip and PIN card in Northampton from a Big Mac to a pint of beer, or underwear to kitchenware. Big household name retailers and food and drink outlets including Formative Fun, Marks & Spencer, McDonald's, Scottish & Newcastle Retail pubs and Wilkinson have 'switched on' chip and PIN as part of the card fraud-busting trial in Northampton. They join other household names in the trial including ASDA, Safeway, Tie Rack and Vodafone. The total number of retailers now participating in the trial is 600 and the number of chip and PIN credit and debit cards issued in Northampton is now 181,500.

The Chip and PIN Programme also today (30 June 2003) reveals the results of new nationwide consumer research into people's attitudes to paying by PIN (personal identification number) instead of signature. The research was conducted among over 1,300 people across the UK, two hundred of whom had been card fraud victims themselves, a crime which netted over £420 million for fraudsters last year. The survey shows that people are frustrated with the current system of paying using a signature and are ready for change.

A whopping 78% of people think that it would be very or fairly easy to forge someone's signature with only 16% thinking it would be difficult. And people get annoyed when their signatures are not scrutinised properly when they go to pay with plastic.

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In contrast, attitudes to the introduction of PINs were very favourable. Seventy per cent said that they believed PINs to be more secure than signatures and the number in favour increases to a massive 87% if those who think both payments are equally secure are included. More than half of respondents said they would prefer using a PIN with 27% saying they didn't mind either method. More than 73% said chip and PIN was a good idea with only 9% disagreeing.

When asked what was the worst thing about being a victim of card fraud, the top answer was that someone was out there pretending to be you (27%). This was followed by the hassle of having to replace cards (23%) and that money obtained from card fraud was used to fund criminal activity (15%).

People were finally asked what methods they use to remember their PINs. Nearly half (47%) say they just memorise the numbers they are given while almost a third (30%) say they change the PIN at their bank's cash machines to something they can remember and, by 2005, it will be possible to change your PIN at any bank's cash machines. Other techniques for remembering PINs included seven per cent who visualise the pattern of numbers on the key pad and 7% who break the 4-digit PIN into two lots of two numbers. Just 7% of people in the survey said they had trouble remembering their PIN.

Said Sandra Quinn, the spokesperson for chip and PIN: "This is great news. The UK's shoppers are showing that they're more than ready to ditch signing and switch to using a PIN. They obviously think it's going to be a much better system. And that's very bad news for the criminals out there who have really targeted people's cards over the last few years."

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For further information please contact:

Chip and PIN press office
Tel: 0870 442 7898
Email: chipandpin@fourplc.com

www.chipandpin.co.uk

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Trial statistics update @ 30 June 2003

FACT	FIGURE
Number of chip and PIN cards issued to people living Northampton postcodes NN1 to NN7	181,500
Number of ATMs upgraded to provide PIN services for chip and PIN cards	139
Number of shops switched onto chip and PIN	600
Number of transactions made with the technology	30,000
Number of weeks of the trial to date	6

Notes to editors:

1. Research was conducted by Tickbox.net during May 2003. 1,332 people participated in an online survey.
2. The programme is part of a global initiative to cut fraud. Many other countries in Europe and around the world are planning to implement the chip and PIN system, which is built to an international standard.
3. The Chip and PIN Programme continues to consult with the Disability Rights Commission to consider the needs of cardholders with disabilities.
4. Chip and PIN will remain in Northampton after the trial period has finished in August: following the trial chip and Pin will gradually be introduced across the rest of country.