



# Accord Newsletter

Welcome to the third Accord Newsletter – a quarterly update on new developments for Aberdeen’s very own smart citizen’s card – and thank you all for your positive feedback on our first two editions.

Our mailing list is growing by the day – if you want to receive your own copy, just email [info@accordaberdeen.co.uk](mailto:info@accordaberdeen.co.uk) and we’ll do the rest. Remember, this is your opportunity to keep up-to-date with what the Accord Scheme can do – and what it can offer you.

## REWARDS FOR A HEALTHY MENU

SCHOOL PUPILS IN ABERDEEN ARE WINNING NEW REWARDS FOR HEALTHY EATING, WITH THE LAUNCH OF A SCHEME THAT ALLOWS STUDENTS TO TURN SALADS AND FRUIT JUICE INTO CDS AND SPORTS KIT.

Three city schools are taking part in a trial of the Swapits Reward scheme – a highly successful programme for the under-18s that has already signed up more than 350,000 young people nationwide.



Pupils can earn Swapit points for choosing healthier school meal options, then ‘spend’ them on the [swapitshop.com](http://swapitshop.com) website in easy-to-use cash-free auctions for a wide range of items such as games, CDs, books, jewellery, DVDs, sports kit, stickers and even one-off money-can’t-buy items. Swapits are awarded via the pupil’s Accord Card.

In the canteen, the pupil simply pays for their food with the smartcard as normal and is automatically awarded the appropriate number of Swapits for their healthier food and drink options.



The Swapits are then automatically credited to the pupils Swapits account the very same day.

The Council’s School Meals Catering Service and the Accord Scheme are trialling Swapits

Rewards in three Aberdeen schools - Torry Academy, St Machar Academy and Bridge of Don Academy – with a view to rolling out the programme across all 12 council-run secondary schools within Aberdeen.

Accord Manager Rhona Atkinson said: “We have always been very clear that Accord is not just an entitlement card, but a citizen’s card that offers real value to those that carry it.

“This is another example of how we are responding to what our users – in this case, both pupils and the education service – want, encouraging healthy eating, but using incentives to make that a more attractive prospect.”

Aberdeen City Council’s School Meals Catering Service encourages healthy eating, as part of the authority’s commitment to meeting the Scottish Executive’s ‘Hungry for Success’ recommendations, which aim to increase the nutritional content of school meals and raise the awareness of healthy eating.

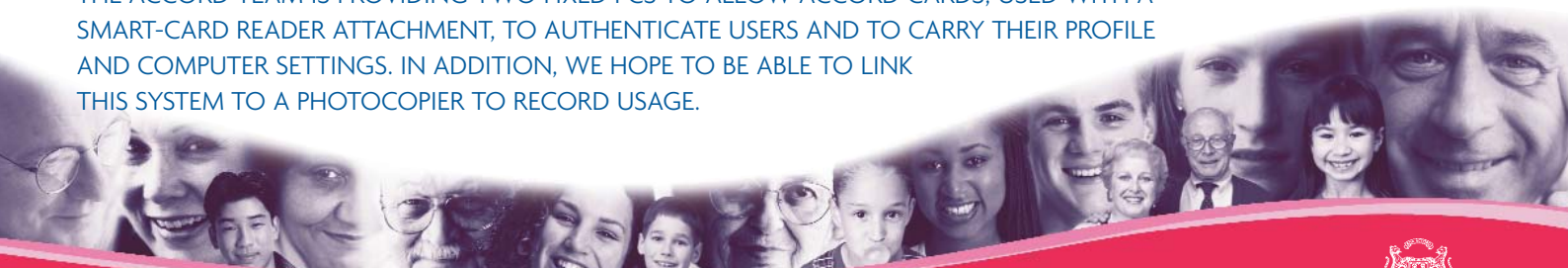
Menus are nutritionally analysed to ensure children are offered a balanced diet over the course of a week, by reducing the amount of fat sugar and salt and encouraging the uptake of fruit, vegetables and carbohydrates.

This means more homecooked dishes and fruit-based desserts on the menu, and less processed foods and sugary puddings. Chilled fruit juice, milk or water are also available with meals – with pupils rewarded for making healthy choices.

## ACCORD SCHEME “HOT-DESKING” TRIAL

THE ACCORD SCHEME IS TO CONTRIBUTE TO A HOT-DESKING TRIAL WITHIN ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL. THE TRIAL, BEING MANAGED BY A TEAM FROM THE COUNCIL’S ICT SERVICES, IS DUE TO START AT THE END OF FEBRUARY AND IS PLANNED TO RUN FOR TWO MONTHS.

THE ACCORD TEAM IS PROVIDING TWO FIXED PCS TO ALLOW ACCORD CARDS, USED WITH A SMART-CARD READER ATTACHMENT, TO AUTHENTICATE USERS AND TO CARRY THEIR PROFILE AND COMPUTER SETTINGS. IN ADDITION, WE HOPE TO BE ABLE TO LINK THIS SYSTEM TO A PHOTOCOPIER TO RECORD USAGE.



# SCOTLAND-WIDE Free Travel Scheme

The Accord Scheme and Aberdeen City Council's Public Transport Unit have launched a major operation to sign up concessionary travel users to a new free nationwide travel deal.

Officers are in the process of handling thousands of applications for the new Scotland-Wide Free Bus Travel for Older and Disabled People Scheme – including around 15,000 new Accord users.

The Scottish Executive is introducing the Scotland-Wide Free Bus Travel for Older and Disabled People Scheme from April 1.

The national scheme will replace all current local concessionary schemes, including that operated by Aberdeen City Council, and will cover all men and women aged 60 or over and those whose disability entitles them to free bus travel.

In order to access the scheme, users will have to replace their existing concessionary travel pass by applying for a new National Entitlement Card. In Aberdeen, this function is being combined with the Accord Card.



Those who already hold Accord Cards have already been processed. However, around 15,000 people still using paper concessionary cards are having their applications verified so they can be issued with a National Entitlement /Accord Card.

Each of these people has been sent application forms and a letter explaining the process.

Verification has been taking place at Aberdeen Arts Centre and the Bucksburn and Peterculter area offices since the start of the year and will continue until early February.

## Future Plans

We know many of our users and stakeholders are keen to know more about upcoming projects so, from now on, you'll find early details of new Accord Scheme applications and developments in this section of your newsletter.

### TOSHIBA TEC

As one of the key providers of equipment to the Accord Scheme, Toshiba TEC Retail Systems are planning a PR campaign to illustrate how their technology is being used to deliver the pioneering smartcard project.

Toshiba is one of the world's top ten manufacturers of electric and electronic equipment. Earlier this month, representatives visited Aberdeen and toured a number of Accord sites, including the Beach Leisure Centre and Hazlehead Academy.

### REVERSE VENDING

We are working on a project aimed at making it attractive for people to return used beverage containers for recycling. Upon redeeming an item, the vending machine will report a unit value and credit this value to the e-purse on the Accord Card. This could be money or reward points.



## QUESTIONNAIRE A WINNER FOR ACCORD SCHEME - AND STUDENTS

The Accord Scheme's student questionnaire has been a major success – giving the team a crucial insight into how our smartcards are used and securing great cash credits for some lucky cardholders. Thousands of students at schools in Aberdeen took part in a major customer survey to help shape the future of the Accord smartcard scheme. Pupils were asked to complete a questionnaire, which recorded how they use their Accord cards, what they think of the scheme and new features they would be interested in. The results have now been analysed and are helping the Accord team gauge user response to the card and the many benefits available through it – and also plan new services. And several of the students who took part received credits of between £5 and £50, with completed questionnaires entered into a prize draw. In November, Spot the Leopard – helped by Aberdeen Grammar pupils Sam Comrie, Sarah Masters and Willow Hay – drew the winners.

## ACCORD CARD SET TO SOAR

A whole new generation is about to become Accord Card users.

After April, the pioneering smartcard – which, up until now has been available mainly to school pupils and concessionary bus travellers – will be open to all.

And the first group to be issued with cards will be 18 to 26-year-olds, in view of Accord's potential as a proof-of-age card.

There are around 28,500 young adults in Aberdeen in the 18-26 age group. The Accord Scheme is confident issuing them with cards will be a boost to the licensed trade, as the Accord Card can easily be used as Proof of Age.

And, with a further 15,000 travel users currently being signed up, the number of Aberdeen's citizens carrying an Accord Card is set to rocket in 2006.



### THE ACCORD TEAM

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