

Deposits are coming to Scotland!

Have You Got The Bottle? is a campaign led by the Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland. Launched in 2015, the campaign has worked to inform politicians and organisations of the importance of introducing a deposit return system for plastic, glass and metal drinks containers to reduce litter, support a circular economy in Scotland, boost the recycling sector and create jobs, reduce public sector costs and improve the environment for residents and visitors alike.



Have You Got The Bottle?

What is a deposit return system?

A deposit return system is a collection system for used drinks container packaging. It runs in parallel with existing kerbside collection systems and is the only modern and economically viable system yet developed that can achieve recycling rates of over 90%.



How does a deposit return system work?

A deposit will be payable on every single use drinks container sold, including glass and plastic bottles and metal cans, covering a wide range of contents, such as water, juice, soft drinks and alcoholic beverages. It could in future be extended to refillable bottles or household products, if there is business demand for that. The deposit will be paid by the consumer on each container they purchase. This deposit acts as an incentive for the consumer to return the container to a retailer so that they can reclaim their deposit. Deposit systems are self-funding and require no financial support from the government, as the costs of the system are met by the deposits paid on the small number of drinks containers which are not returned, plus the value of the high-quality materials recovered by the system and a small producer contribution. Deposit return can run in parallel with existing

kerbside collection systems, and is the only modern and economically viable system yet developed that can achieve recycling rates of over 90%.

Larger retailers will collect returned containers via reverse vending machines, which separate the containers into material type, preventing contamination.

Smaller retailers can collect the returned containers manually over the counter. The returned containers are then collected from the retailer for recycling.

As international evidence shows, over 90% of the drinks containers sold are returned by consumers, and then separated at source, the material gathered by a deposit system is high quality as well as higher volume. This helps build the circular economy and promote recycling.

Founding partners:



What benefits will a deposit return system bring to Scotland?

Litter reduction – Drinks containers are one of the most visible types of litter and are made from valuable materials. When they are discarded as litter, it is a waste of resources and has a big impact on people's enjoyment of their environment, as well as negative effects on wildlife on land and at sea. Return rates of over 90% mean litter is significantly reduced, making public spaces cleaner and more attractive.

Thriving recycling sector – with a guaranteed and consistent supply of high quality materials, available in greater quantities, Scotland's recycling sector, including social enterprises, will be confident about investing in expansion.

Local council savings – As the majority of drinks containers will be collected separately from existing kerbside collections, the cost of these services to local councils reduces, as does the cost of litter pickup and bin emptying. Overall councils should expect a net financial gain of around **£13m a year**.

Circular economy – collecting our empty cans and bottles more efficiently will mean better raw materials for Scottish industry, and treating used packaging as a resource rather than waste is an important part of the shift to a circular economy.

More jobs – With the growth of the recycling sector, there will be more high-quality jobs created in Scotland. There are also jobs required to run the central operating system which can be based anywhere, including areas of high unemployment. For comparison, estimates suggest that a UK-wide system would generate up to 4,300 jobs.

Climate change – Litter and landfill aren't just wasteful, they're bad for the planet. Making packaging from recycled materials rather than new can cut carbon emissions by up to 60% and reduce demand for oil.

Scotland will be part of an international community

Deposit return systems run in many countries and states across the world, including Norway and Canada. In Catalonia, 85% of retailers supported a deposit return system when surveyed after a 2013 pilot project. This pilot also showed savings for the local authority of between 6.5% and 9.5% of packaging and refuse collection. Most recently, the state of New South Wales (NSW) in Australia has decided to introduce a deposit return system, following extensive research. This presents reassuring parallels to Scotland, as NSW also has remote rural areas, world-famous cities, an extensive coastline, porous borders with the surrounding states, and a focus on tourism to support the economy.

www.haveyogotthebottle.org.uk



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