



Have You Got The Bottle? 10 facts about deposit return

1. How a Deposit Return System works

A deposit return system means you pay a small deposit when you buy drinks cans and bottles, which you get back when you return them. By increasing recycling and reducing litter, it would lead to a cleaner, greener and more sustainable Scotland for us all.

2. Deposits are widely used around the world

37 countries or regions in the world have introduced effective deposit return systems including Croatia, Estonia, Germany, Norway, Sweden and Finland. It's also used in most of Canada, 10 US states and large areas of Australia.

Over 130 million people in the EU alone live in countries with deposit systems, with more member states moving towards them.

3. Deposit return on drinks containers is the next step towards a cleaner Scotland

About 40% of all drinks are bought away from home, so a deposit makes it more likely they'll be recycled by being brought back to a shop.

Drinks containers also use up huge amounts of energy in manufacturing, which contributes to greenhouse gas emissions. The more we recycle, the better for our environment and our economy.

Plus, drinks packaging is responsible for up to 50% of litter on land and 80%-95% of the litter in our seas by volume or weight.

4. Deposit return won't cost you a penny

Unlike a tax, with a deposit you get it back in full when you return your empties to any shop that sells them. Smaller shops will simply take them back over the counter in return for credit or cash. Larger shops and supermarkets will have easy-to-use 'reverse vending' machines that give you a credit note to redeem.

And if you buy groceries online, the delivery van can take your bottles away just like it does with carrier bags.

5. Returning your drink containers is quick and easy

Most people take bags to the shops with them at least some of the time, especially since the carrier bag charge came in. With deposit return, you

can just take your empties back to the shop when you go or give them to the delivery driver if you order your groceries online. And if you're out and about, just take your empty can or bottle into a shop rather than putting it in a bin.

6. Deposit return reduces litter very effectively

Drinks packaging makes up 50% or so of litter by volume, and deposit return achieves recycling rates of over 90%+ in places that have it. The reduction in bottles and cans littering our countryside will be visible.

It might be surprising that a small deposit changes behaviour so effectively, but everywhere it's been adopted the evidence is that people are less likely to throw money away.

7. Deposit return systems greatly improve recycling rates

In Germany, 98.5% of plastic bottles are recycled. In Norway, Sweden and Finland it's over 90%. There's absolutely no reason that can't happen in Scotland too. The Scottish Government wants to hit overall recycling rates of 70% by 2025, yet the most recent figures showed our household recycling rates had inched up by just 1% to 42% in 2013. We need to do something about it – and deposit return can play a huge part.

8. Deposit return works alongside existing kerbside recycling

Kerbside collection is an important part of the mix, but as much as 50% is lost during collection, sorting, and processing, and the materials it collects are mixed, whereas deposit return brings in high-quality, cleaner containers. Kerbside collection is also expensive for local authorities, which is why research commissioned by the Scottish Government said deposit return could save local taxpayers £13m a year across Scotland.

What's more, we consume up to 40% of drinks away from home so kerbside collection doesn't help with that. Not everyone has access to kerbside recycling either, especially in more rural areas and some parts of our cities. Instead, many urban centres have communal recycling bins on the street, and keeping cans and bottles out of them saves councils money and results in better-quality recycling.

9. The Scottish public strongly support deposit return

A Survation poll commissioned by APRS in 2015 showed that nearly 79% of people in Scotland are in favour of DRS. (Survation is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules.)

We asked 1,000 people in Scotland this simple, clear and honest question:

Elsewhere, including in Denmark, Canada and Germany, a small deposit is paid to retailers when you buy drinks cans and bottles and fully refunded by retailers when you return the container, in order to increase recycling and reduce litter. To what extent would you support or oppose the introduction of a similar type of system in Scotland?

41.1% were 'strongly supportive,' 37.3% were 'somewhat supportive' – meaning 78.8% of those surveyed support a Scottish deposit return system. 5.2% were 'somewhat opposed' and 3.3% were 'strongly opposed,' totalling just 8.5%. Those numbers make clear what people in Scotland want.

10. The people behind the *Have You Got The Bottle?* campaign

The campaign is led by The Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland, and other organisations have quickly joined as partners. Right now, we have 25 supporter organisations from business, the non-government and community sectors, including Changeworks Recycling, Triathlon Scotland, Whitmuir Organics, Eco Congregations, Cornelius Beers, Friends of the Earth Scotland, the Marine Conservation Society, WWF Scotland, Spokes, Surfers Against Sewage, Ramblers Scotland, the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland and lots of others. Together, they represent around 300,000 people in Scotland.

Most importantly, we're the voice of the 79% of people in Scotland who support introducing a deposit return system.



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