



DEPOSIT RETURN: SCOTLAND SETS THE PACE FOR THE UK

APRS/MCS/FoES MEDIA RELEASE

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Environmental campaigners today welcomed the Scottish Government's announcement of the scope of Scotland's deposit return system. Ministers have confirmed that glass, cans and some plastic containers will be covered, but other plastics and materials such as tetrapaks and pouches are not to be included initially. The deposit will be set at 20p for all containers, and retailers of all sizes will be paid by the system to accept returns.

The Have You Got The Bottle? campaign [1], which launched in 2015 to press for deposits on drinks containers in Scotland, has long argued for a system which includes as many materials as possible. Not only do such systems reduce litter and boost recycling, but they also reduce the risk that producers will switch to less sustainable materials in order to avoid having to take part in the system.

Research commissioned by the campaign indicates that the system proposed by Scottish Ministers today will, when operational, divert around 140,000 empty cans and bottles from litter to recycling every day [2].

Jenni Hume, Campaign Manager for the *Have You Got The Bottle?* campaign, said:

"The deposit system set out today is a major step in the right direction, setting the pace for the rest of the UK, and it will have a substantial positive impact on litter and recycling. It's great news that the Scottish Government are ready for the system to expand in future to include more drinks containers, which will be both more effective and easier for the public to use.

"Now we know how the system will work initially, the key will be to persuade the rest of the UK to adopt the Scottish model. It is in the interests of the environment, the public and business for the other administrations to adopt an approach that is just as inclusive.

"Introducing deposits will be a complex process, and the setup phase must be very robustly organised. We are hopeful that Scotland will continue to draw on the experiences of our friends and neighbours in Scandinavia and the Baltics and build an efficient system that captures as many empty drinks containers as possible."

Calum Duncan, Head of Conservation Scotland for the Marine Conservation Society, said:

"Our beach litter data highlights a shocking amount of glass items found on Scotland's beaches, an average of 78 pieces for every 100m of beach surveyed during the Great British Beach Clean 2018. We are very pleased with today's announcement that the system will include glass, along with some plastics and aluminium, and all sizes of those drinks containers.

"Scotland is now ahead of the game and the rest of the UK must follow to ensure we have the best systems in place across these islands to increase recycling and help reduce the tide of glass and plastic bottles and cans blighting our shores."

Dr Richard Dixon, Director of Friends of the Earth Scotland, said:

"This is great news: the system announced today will provide a huge boost for recycling of bottles and cans, reduce litter across Scotland, and save both materials and climate change emissions. This is a great start to getting the public to do even more recycling and it is the kind of system which can be expanded to other products over time.

"This scheme will set a good benchmark to influence the thinking for a similar scheme for England and the ideal is that the two schemes will eventually work in the exactly the same way."

Notes

1. For more information about APRS's *Have You Got The Bottle?* campaign, see:

<http://www.haveyogotthebottle.org.uk>

2. The research note from Eunomia, commissioned by this campaign, is here:

<http://www.haveyogotthebottle.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/LitteringEunomiaMarch2019.pdf>

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