

Public Support for a Deposit Return System in Scotland



Over the last 4 years APRS has been leading the Deposit Return public engagement and school education programme at events, in schools, with Rotary groups and in partnership with venues and charities e.g. Edinburgh Zoo, Loch Leven Larder, Dunfermline's Food For Your Future.

We have been engaging with all demographics who are experiencing the impact of litter in their communities, on roads, on beaches, in rivers and in the countryside. They are excited about deposit return coming to Scotland and the opportunities redeeming discarded deposit items, could bring to them personally.

David Spence, Fife Street Champions, who helps coordinate litter picking volunteers from a Facebook group of more than 3000 members across Fife, said: ***"It's not until you get involved in litter picking either professionally, or as a volunteer, that you really understand the size of the problem. Having corresponded with litter picking groups all over the UK, I can honestly say that there is hardly a council in the country that can cope. The deposit return scheme will undoubtedly help to reduce the amount of drinks containers that are thrown indiscriminately on the ground, a large proportion of which are thrown from moving vehicles."***



Throughout these 4 years APRS has been hearing the public's thoughts on deposit return, answering their queries and sharing information about how DRS will work and the response has continued to be overwhelmingly positive. Here are a few of the people we have met:



Sophy, Head of Operations at the Edinburgh Compass Group - ***"looking forward to deposit return, as it will make my businesses more sustainable and environmentally friendly"***.

Judy and her daughter Jessica are ***"really excited for deposit return to be introduced"*** remembering stories of Barrs Lemonade bottles being returned to trucks and sharing the excitement of collecting the bottles and cans to redeem the deposits for themselves when younger.

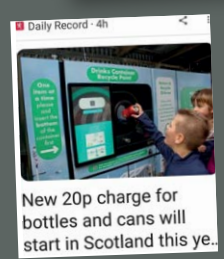


Aileen from Winchburgh, is a litter picker with APRS's 2023-2024 Deposit Return Litter Survey in partnership with MCS's Source to Sea project. She found these littered bottles and cans in her local woods, cleaned them and took them to her local Sainsburys who are running a trial of deposit return over the counter.

She receives nectar points for each can and bottle she returns of her own or if she finds any. Asked if she thought the trial was a good idea, she said ***"I think it's a fab idea, I received over £100 on bottle/can returns last year. This has been used to cover each the Winchburgh Violet Football team member's birthday sweets, oranges for match days and the odd bottle of wine for me. Win win"*** Jan 2023.

Violet Football team member's birthday sweets, oranges for match days and the odd bottle of wine for me. Win win" Jan 2023.

Fiona Ware from Edinburgh, has just begun volunteering for APRS's litter survey ***"The success of the plastic bag charge shows that policy changes can make a real difference to reducing the litter that blights our countryside and coasts. I am delighted that the bottle and can Deposit Scheme will be going live in Scotland in 2023 and I hope the results of the APRS Deposit Return Litter Survey will encourage other regions to adopt similar schemes in the future."***



We come across people every day on social media and in responses to our calls for volunteers who are desperate for the DRS to come in as soon as possible and are helping gather litter data for our Deposit Return Litter Survey pre and post DRS.

All this feedback builds on historical polls of positive support from the Scottish people for DRS which has not waned:

IN SEPT 2019 YOUNGOV SURVEY COMMISSIONED BY ZERO WASTE SCOTLAND FOUND THAT APPROXIMATELY

77% of people in Scotland support the introduction of the country's bottle deposit return scheme (DRS).

IN JUNE 2020 THE POPULUS POLL, COMMISSIONED BY NATURE 2030, SHOWED

84% of the UK public believe the government should introduce an "ALL-IN" scheme covering all drinks containers – up from 69% in May 2019.

85%

of people in Scotland say that glass should be included in Scotland's 20p Deposit Return Scheme, according to figures released by Zero Waste Scotland in August 2019.



Scouts Scotland are working in partnership with APRS to share the story of deposit return and the circular economy with their Scouts across Scotland through new resources for leaders as part of their Promise to the Planet initiative. Further educational partnerships with John Muir Award and RSPB Wild Challenge are ongoing.

Deposit Return is a circular economy initiative and is about a sustainable future. It is an example to our children and their families of what can be achieved if we commit to a sustainable way of life and as far as the children we have met are concerned, they want it to start now.

Their voices should be heard and remembered in our minds when we are choosing whether to effect such positive change for their future and the future of Scotland's environment.



YOUTH ENGAGEMENT



In Jan 2022 APRS launched their online Countryside Protectors programme about Deposit Return including an interactive game for children and learning resources. 270 copies of the hard copy of the resource was requested by teachers in the first month, to deliver for Learning for Sustainability. The game has been a hit with children and adults!



Through the Fife STEM Connect-ability Festival in 2022, schools across rural communities in Fife invited APRS to deliver their Deposit Return presentation, with the children sharing excitement about DRS coming to Scotland through posters, see right.



Children from Dunbog Primary School with APRS's mock deposit return RVM.



Quotes from children: Deposit Return Poster Competition winners P5b class display St Mary's Primary School Edinburgh. Isla, Neel and Fabian from P5b said:



"I hope people will stop littering because of Deposit Return"

"We hope our posters help people understand how Deposit Return helps the environment."

"P5b are super excited that Deposit Return is coming back to Scotland!"

PLEASE CONTACT: JO MCFARLANE
Public Engagement and Education Manager, APRS
education@aprs.scot

www.aprs.scot • @APRScotland

