



Scotland's Deposit Return Scheme

Work is well underway on design options for Scotland's deposit return scheme, which we at Zero Waste Scotland are developing at the Scottish Government's request.

Working with other experts and industry representatives is crucial to ensuring that our options for the proposed scheme design are the most appropriate ones for Scotland. We are building on our existing expert research and consulting extensively with stakeholders and key partners. This work will culminate in a public consultation on the matter in the coming months.

The enthusiasm for increasing recycling, from both the public and industry alike, is strong, and it's fantastic to see other nations now taking inspiration from Scotland's leadership and considering how deposit return could work for them.

We've seen a wide range of schemes around Europe and the world, which can achieve return rates for containers ranging from 65% to over 90% for some materials.

Zero Waste Scotland's research and evidence from existing deposit return schemes elsewhere suggests a Scottish scheme could achieve similar results to those at the high end of this range, and have a real impact on our throwaway culture.

Meanwhile, I'm delighted to announce details about the forthcoming Deposit Return Summit in this newsletter. The event, which will include ministerial involvement from Environment Secretary Roseanna Cunningham, will mark the culmination of our stakeholder consultations and offer an opportunity to come and speak to us and share views.

The event aims to bring together a variety of perspectives, and will provide a forum to hear them represented directly from the key sectors affected by deposit return. I hope to see many of you there.



Iain Gulland

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Iain Gulland".

Chief Executive
Zero Waste Scotland

Deposit Return Summit

with Environment Secretary, Roseanna Cunningham

During Zero Waste Scotland's work to design options for Scotland's deposit return scheme, we have heard from hundreds of partners keen to find out more, share their thoughts and explore potential challenges. A range of stakeholders have been invited to have their say – from retailers and producers to councils and community groups. We're delighted to announce that this important work will culminate in a Deposit Return Summit, hosted by Zero Waste Scotland, on the potential designs of the scheme.

The event, to be held at Heriot Watt University on Wednesday 23 May, will give organisations from different sectors and interest groups a chance to find out about some of the topics raised at the sector reference groups we have held as part of our communication with stakeholders, to discuss these in further detail and, in light of more recent announcements on deposit return, to hear from experts on deposit return schemes around the world.

Stakeholders are invited to register their interest in attending the deposit return summit by Friday 4 May. Places at the event will be limited and, to ensure a balanced representation of views and key sectors, Zero Waste Scotland may need to select participants from those who have registered their interest to attend. Invited delegates will receive confirmation of their place

two weeks in advance of the event. Details of the agenda for the event will be released soon. We look forward to continuing to work with stakeholders to shape the best possible deposit return scheme for Scotland.

[Register now](#)

UK deposit return

It was recently announced by the UK Government that a deposit return scheme will be introduced in England, with options for a scheme for single-use containers to go out to public consultation later this year.

The Scottish Government has expressed a desire to work closely with the UK Government to ensure communities north and south of the border reap the benefits of a deposit return scheme. Zero Waste Scotland is already engaged with organisations who work across the UK.

Environment Secretary Roseanna Cunningham has since written to her counterparts in other devolved nations, and Westminster, inviting them to attend a meeting in Scotland to discuss a coordinated approach.



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Do you think there should be a single scheme across the UK?

This is a matter for the Scottish Government and other UK governments to decide. Zero Waste Scotland is committed to designing an ambitious deposit return scheme for Scotland that can increase recycling and reduce litter. We welcome the announcement by the UK Government, which will mean that communities on both sides of the border will see the benefits of deposit return.

Where are you in terms of designing a scheme?

We've done a lot of the groundwork in terms of looking at how different schemes operate around the world and what makes them successful. We've also spoken with hundreds of partners to get their views on how a scheme would work best for Scotland.

The options we design will go out for a public consultation later in the year.

How much are you proposing to make the deposit?

That's one of the scheme design considerations we'll be consulting on. It's likely to be a small deposit, but it needs to be enough to incentivise people to return their bottles and cans.

Activity update

With our stakeholder consultation sessions and regional workshops drawing to a close, the deposit return team at Zero Waste Scotland is now collating views from more than 120 one to one interviews and strategic conversations ahead of the Deposit Return Summit in May.

During the course of our research, Zero Waste Scotland representatives have undertaken fact-finding visits to countries including Estonia, Lithuania, Iceland, Norway and Germany. These nations are among those with an operating deposit return scheme, and had valuable learnings to share in relation to design considerations such as the level of deposit, the types of container the deposit could apply to, the options for where containers are returned, and how the scheme could be managed and promoted.

Zero Waste Scotland is focussed on developing design options that generate the best possible scheme for Scotland. We look forward to seeing the most promising options going to a full consultation in the coming months.



For more information on the engagement process, please contact Zero Waste Scotland on the details below.

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