

CPRE's Golden Rules for deposit return

CPRE's Golden Rules highlight the key principles for how a deposit return system should work in England. Here's some information about why these Golden Rules are important.

Includes all sizes of bottle, can and carton

- Every size of drinks container is littered. To clean up the countryside we need every bottle, can and carton being returned.
- It's less confusing if all types of drinks containers are included in the system. You shouldn't have to check the size of bottles or cans you've bought before you return them.
- When there's a limit to what sizes are included, the people who make the drinks change the sizing to avoid the deposit system. We don't want that to happen here.



System restricted to 3l size and smaller / Industry makes bottles at 3.1l to avoid the system

- It doesn't make economic or environmental sense to limit what the deposit system can collect. The more containers that are returned, the more that can be recycled into new bottles and cans.

Includes all materials - aluminium, plastic, glass and Tetrapak

- All types of drinks containers are littered. We need every type of container - whether a plastic or glass bottle, can, carton or pouch - to be returned to prevent litter.
- It is less confusing for people if all materials are included in the system. It's much easier to remember that every drinks container will have a deposit on it.
- Some packaging materials, such as Tetrapak (used for drinks cartons, for example), are difficult and expensive to recycle. Because a deposit system makes drinks manufacturers pay the full costs of capturing and recycling these materials, it can incentivise drinks manufacturers to make better packaging choices and shift to ones that are easier to recycle.
- When there's a limit to what materials are included, the people who make drinks could switch to using materials that aren't included to avoid the deposit system.

Is accessible for all, regardless of mobility or other considerations

- A deposit system must be accessible for everyone, regardless of where they live, their mobility or other considerations such as impaired vision.

- There should be as many return points as possible, taking advantage of the UK's extensive network of large and small shops, as well as other local amenity sites and online delivery vans.
- The information on reverse vending machines and public messaging about the deposit system must be clear and easily understandable for everyone.

Is paid for by the drinks manufacturers

- Deposit return systems follow the 'polluter pays' principle. It's the drinks manufacturers who are producing the packaging that ends up polluting the environment - through litter, landfill or incineration - so they must pay the costs of capturing it.
- Having the manufacturers pay for the system reduces the financial burden on local councils, and consequently tax payers' money, of providing waste management services.

Is UK-wide

- Many people travel regularly across the borders within the UK, so it makes sense for a drinks container that's bought in Aberdeen to be able to be returned in Penzance.
- A UK-wide system is cheaper for drinks producers as they can have the same labelling on their products throughout the UK.

Is carbon neutral, with no impact on climate change

- Climate change is the greatest threat to the countryside, so it is vital that this new system, which will require new infrastructure and sophisticated logistics, is at least carbon neutral.

Boosts the UK recycling sector, with any new plants being built on brownfield first

- Until recently, a shameful amount of our recycling was sent overseas. The large amount of high quality materials collected through the deposit system should be used to reinvigorate UK-based recycling plants, helping to create new jobs.
- Prioritising recycling in the UK will reduce emissions from transporting our waste overseas.
- Any new recycling centres should be built on brownfield land first, to have the dual benefit of regenerating areas that have previously been built on and preventing new developments unnecessarily encroaching on our valuable countryside and green spaces.

Works alongside other solutions to reduce waste and increase recycling

- An inclusive deposit system will reduce litter on an unprecedented scale and significantly improve recycling rates. But a well-designed system also has the potential to complement the government's other proposed reforms to the recycling and waste industry, including establishing consistent systems for what's collected via kerbside.
- As a type of economic incentive, a deposit system can also work alongside other measures such as the carrier bag charge and other proposed taxes, bans and charges which are needed to reduce the use and sale of single-use disposable items and encourage reuse.

Do you agree?

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