Valpak
by Reconomy

Balancing a Deposit Return Scheme

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Overview

A Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) sees consumers pay a small deposit on top of the retail price when purchasing specific items. This deposit is refunded when the packaging is returned for recycling. The direct aims of such a scheme are typically to increase packaging recycling rates and to reduce littering, while additional benefits can include reduced greenhouse gas emissions, reduced use of virgin resources and a shift towards more environmentally conscious consumer behaviour.

The UK government currently aims to roll out a DRS for single-use drinks containers in England and Northern Ireland from October 2027[1], with similar schemes and timeframes planned for Scotland and Wales by the respective devolved governments[2,3]. This follows implementations of DRS throughout much of Europe, including the Republic of Ireland in 2024[4]. The DRS will sit alongside Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging (pEPR)[5] and (in England) Simpler Recycling[6] in a suite of environmental legislation aimed at redistributing waste management costs onto producers and increasing recycling rates.

This paper draws on theory, data, and learnings from other nations to explore the various elements which will need to be carefully balanced if a successful implementation of a DRS in the UK is to be realised. These elements are discussed in the context of three broad themes: finance, convenience and materials. In short, a successful DRS – one which reduces littering and instead sees large volumes of high-quality material captured – will be financially sustainable, socially accepted and environmentally beneficial.

Abbreviation	Meaning
DDRS	Digital Deposit Return Scheme
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs
DMO	Deposit Management Organisation
DRS	Deposit (and) Return Scheme
HMRC	His Majesty's Revenue and Customs
MRF ["murf"]	Materials Recovery Facility
NPWD	National Packaging Waste Database
pEPR	Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging
PET	Polyethylene Terephthalate
POM	Placed on the market
PRN	Packaging Waste Recycling Note / Packaging Recovery Note
ROI	Republic of Ireland
UK	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
US(A)	United States (of America)
VAT	Value added tax

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1. Economic Balance

The UK government's impact assessment indicates that a DRS could result in a sizeable net economic gain[7], with the benefits to society derived from reduced litter, reduced greenhouse gas emissions and increased revenue from collected materials outweighing the costs to businesses associated with compliance, logistics, relabelling and so on. Brands and manufacturers of drinks containers will, in other words, bear the upfront financial burden based on the 'polluter pays' principal while the environmental, social and derived economic benefits are realised by society. Actualising this economic gain will require thoughtful calibration of financial flows, including how the DMO is funded and how the deposit amount should be set and repaid.

1.1. DMO funding

The UK government has appointed an industry coalition as the Deposit Management Organisation (DMO), responsible for the practical delivery of the DRS[8,9]. It is expected to be funded through a combination of the sale of collected materials, producer fees, and unredeemed deposits.

Income from the sale of collected materials is inversely related to income from unredeemed deposits: either the consumer fails to return the item and therefore forfeits their deposit to the DMO[10], or they return the item and the DMO generates income from selling the collected bottle material. This means that any decrease in unredeemed deposits (i.e. any increase in the return rate) causes an increase in income from the sale of materials (Figure 1). If the deposit amount is set at 20p per container (as is widely anticipated), the value of the deposit will far outweigh the value of the material itself. Therefore as return rates increase, the DMO's income will likely decrease.

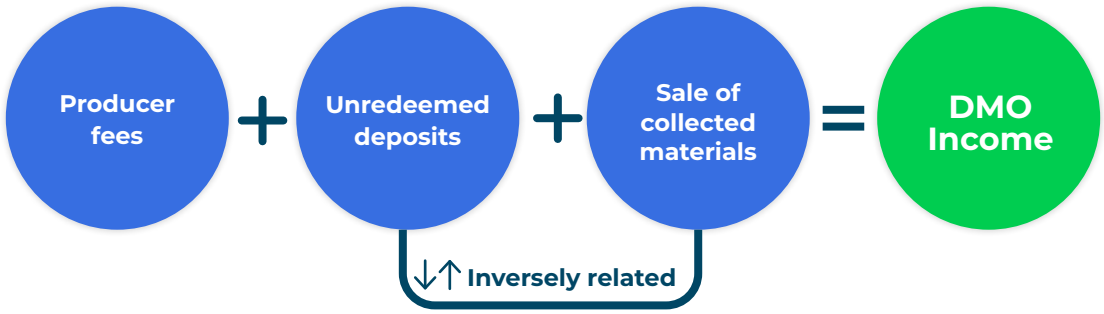
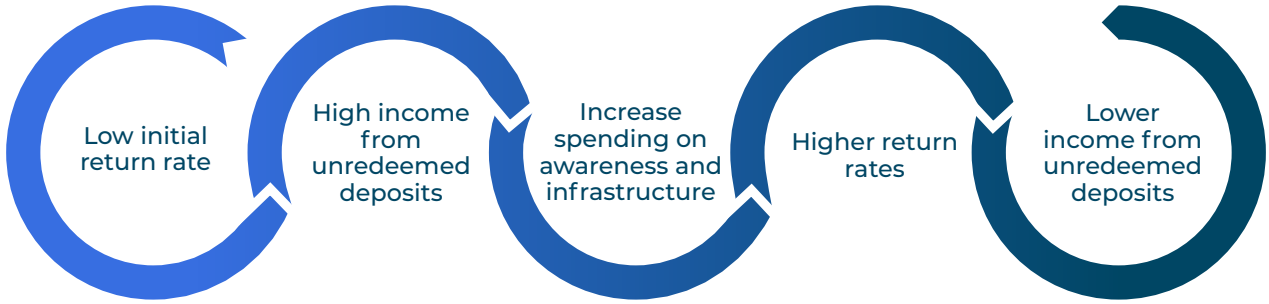


Figure 1: Makeup of the income of the UK DMO once operational.

Given that the value per unit weight of the material collected is largely outside of the control of the DMO, striking the right balance between producer fees and unredeemed deposits will be critical. On the one hand, heavy reliance on unredeemed deposits would create a perverse incentive for sub-maximal consumer participation in the scheme, which would threaten to undermine the aims of the legislation. On the other hand, hefty producer registration fees might risk these costs being passed through the supply chain to consumers. While private financing might help to cover initial costs associated with transport, logistics and infrastructure, the DMO itself must run on a not-for-profit basis and potential for private investment is therefore limited.



Figure 2: Chain of feedback between return rates and DMO income from unredeemed deposits.



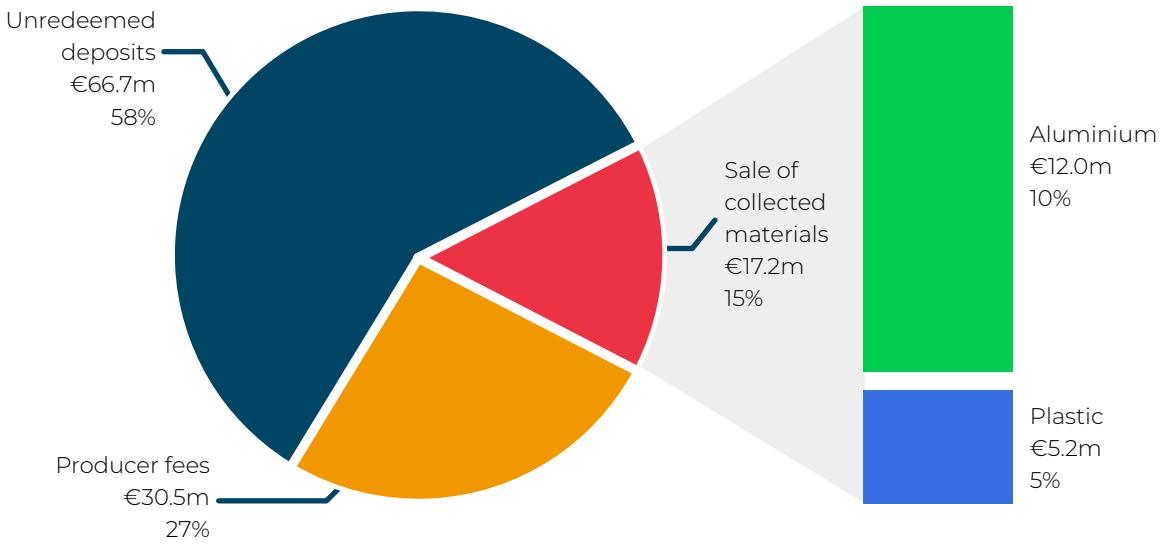
An optimal solution might initially use unredeemed deposits to repay initial set-up costs but plan to reduce this dependency in subsequent years, as awareness and use of the DRS by the public improves and running costs are streamlined. In Ireland for example, the DRS operator Re-turn declared an income of €66.7m from unredeemed deposits in its first year of operation (2024), which contributed to an operational post-taxation surplus of €44.9m[11]. This money is being used to pay off initial set-up costs and to re-invest in infrastructure development and awareness campaigns, which is expected to drive higher future return rates. As such – when appropriate safeguards such as mandatory not-for-profit status of the DMO and scrutiny (or regulation) of DMO director remuneration[12] are in place, as they are in Ireland – levels of unredeemed deposits should be self-limiting (Figure 2).

Re-turn's income from sale of collected materials can be further broken down into material types by introducing assumptions regarding the average unit weight and relative material value[13]. The result is shown in Figure 3 below. Despite the approximately even split between aluminium and plastic in terms of units returned, aluminium units contribute more to the income of the DMO.

1.2. Deposit amount

Probably the most visible trade-off will be the value of the deposit to be paid by consumers: too high a deposit risks discouraging purchases of in-scope products in the first place[14] or shifting drinks formats from multi-pack cans to large plastic bottles[15], while too low a deposit may not be sufficient to incentivise returns. Alongside (and intertwined with) public sentiment, the value of the deposit will be instrumental in determining the fate of a UK DRS. Current expectation is that the deposit amount will be 20p per container regardless of size, although this is not a legal requirement and will

Figure 3: Breakdown of Re-turn income in 2024 (first year of operation) as derived from its 2024 annual report[11] and modelling assumptions[13]

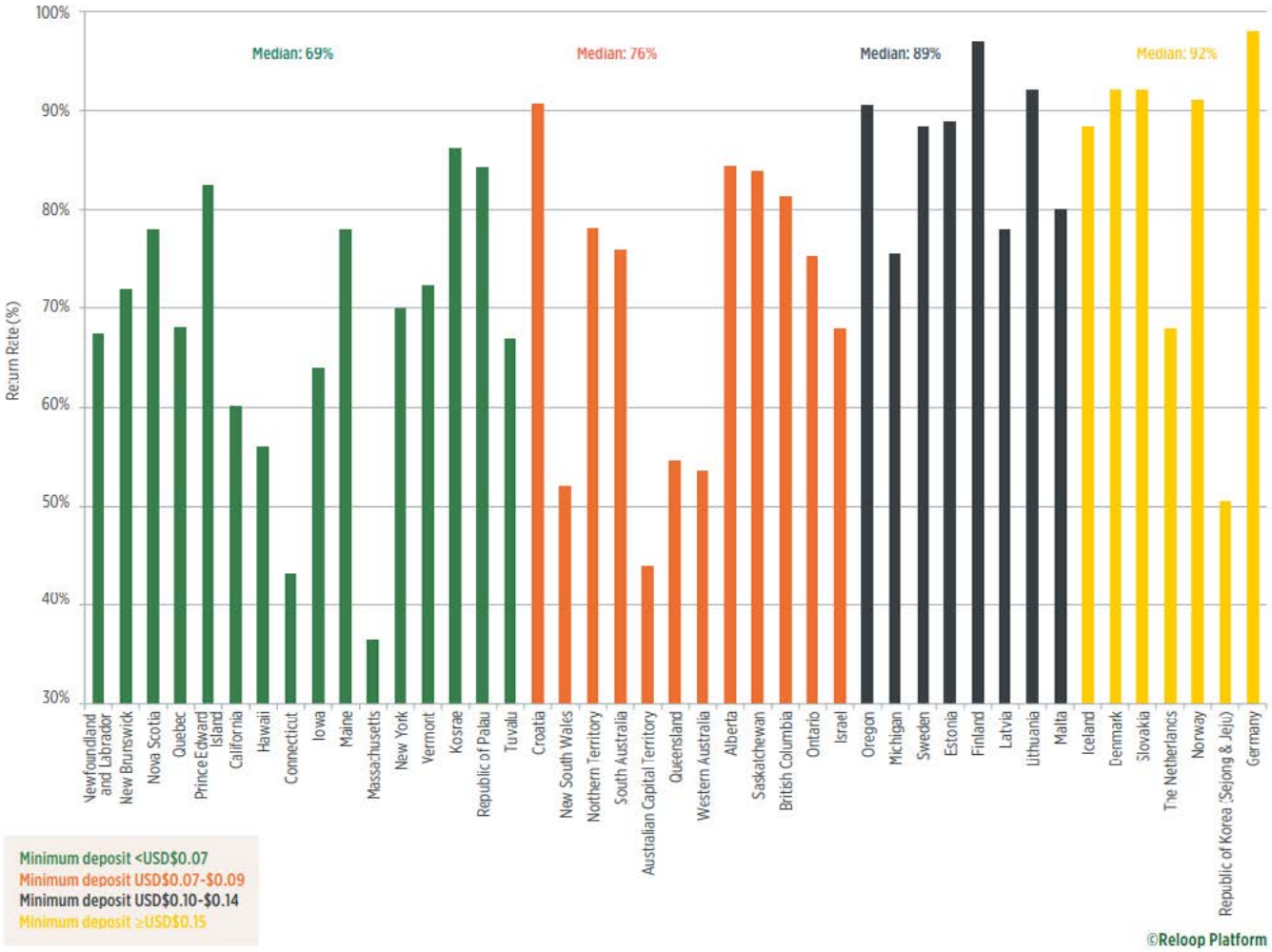


ultimately be decided by the DMO, and could be varied later.

Experience from DRS in other nations indicates that higher deposit values generally yield higher return rates , with Germany, Denmark and Norway having among the highest deposit amounts (>USD$0.15) and the highest return rates[16] (>90%) (see Figure 4). However, it must be noted that deposit return schemes in these nations are long established and are effectively culturally integrated.

The challenge from an economic perspective would therefore appear to be optimising for a deposit value which maximises the return rate without affecting sales. A 20p deposit would sit at the higher end of the spectrum and makes for simpler 'mental maths', but is of course no guarantee of public engagement.

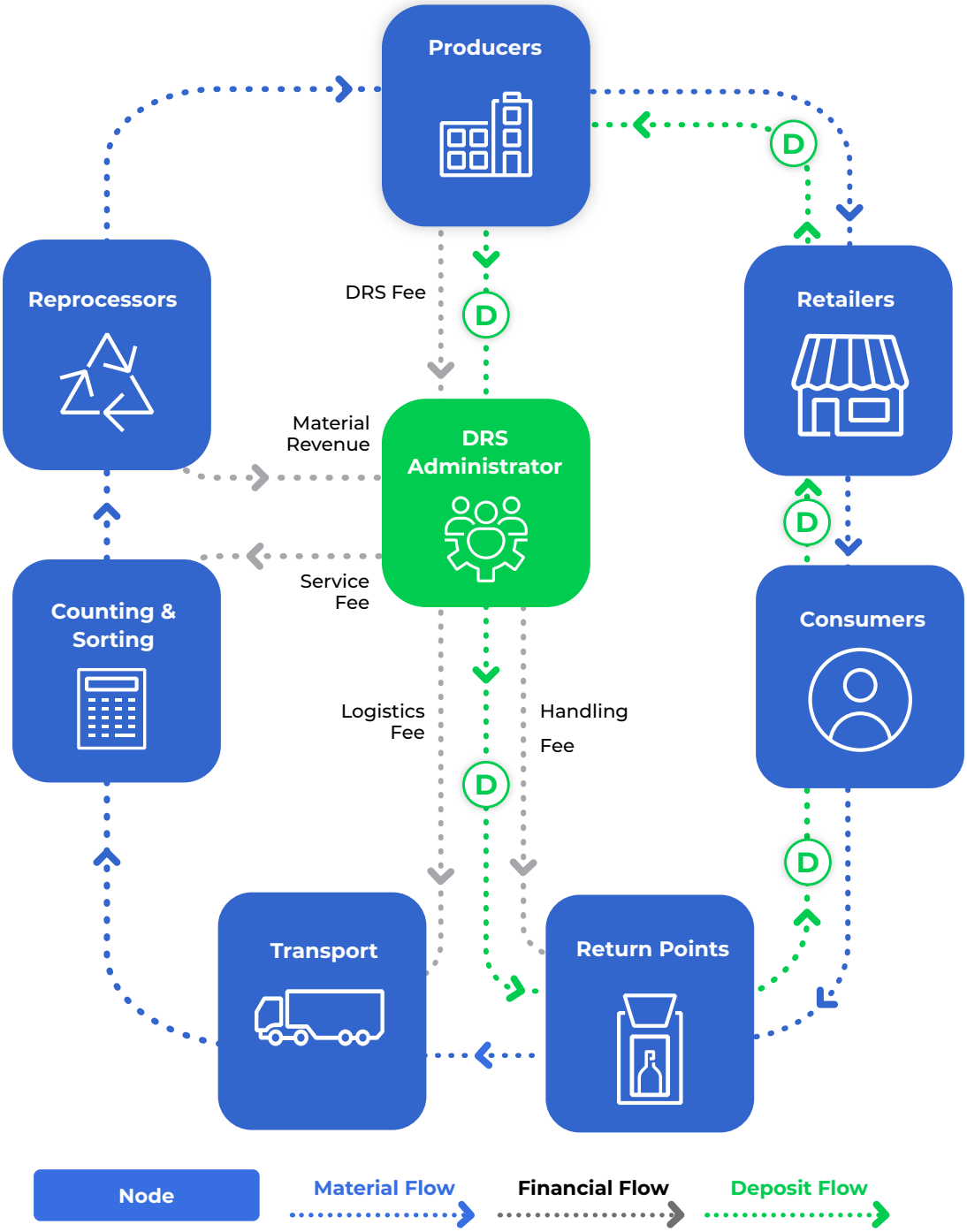
Figure 4: Latest Return Rates in Deposit Return Systems, Globally, by Minimum Deposit Value (USD). Reproduced from Reloop's 'Deposit return systems: how they perform' factsheet (2024)[16].



1.3. Deposit flows

Cash flow, and the management of rapid transfers of money between consumers, retailers, the DMO and others will be a challenge when it comes to balancing interests and avoiding fraud.

Figure 5: Diagram of financial and material flows in a DRS system. Reproduced from RLG[17].

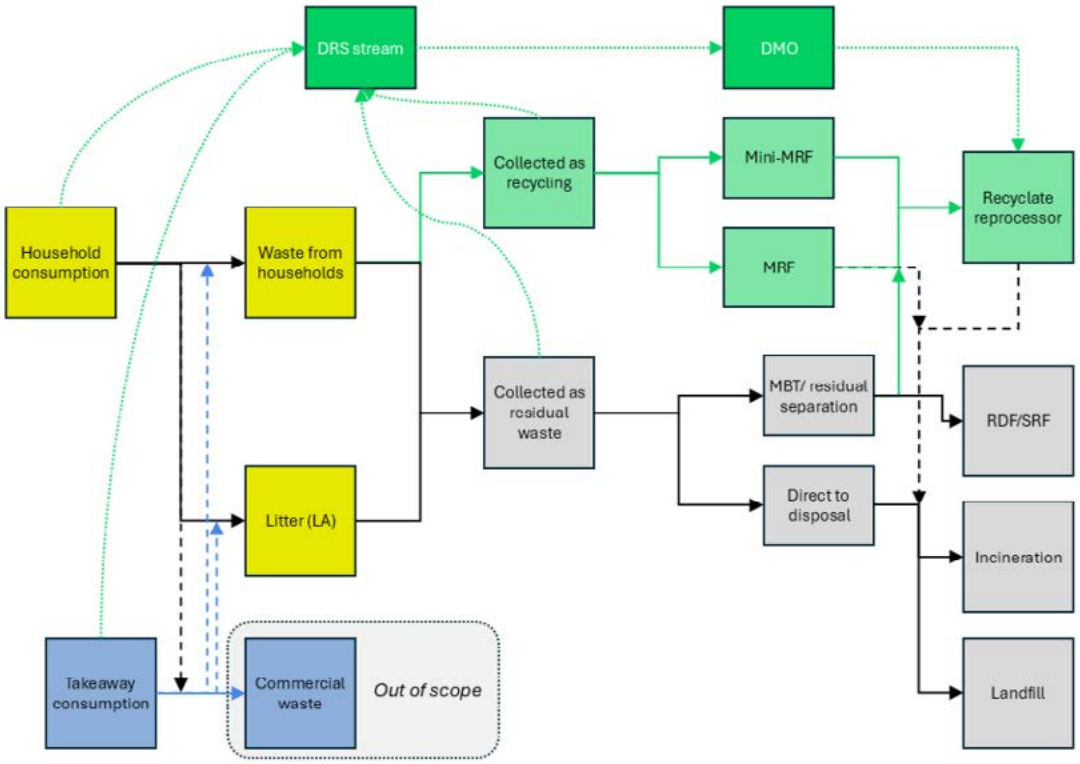


From a consumer perspective, while there may be an interval of between minutes and weeks between purchasing and returning an in-scope container, consumers will expect the instant return of their deposit value with the choice of digital, cash or voucher. In order for cash refunds to be available, a retailer operating a return point must front the cost of the refund. However, the retailer does not hold the deposit value in advance, having paid the deposit to their supplier upon purchase of the filled drinks container. This could imply cashflow challenges for retailers if there is any significant delay between the refund being issued to the consumer and reimbursement by the DMO. As such, the DMO will need to calibrate settlement cycles to be sufficiently frequent (e.g. up to daily) to minimise retailer exposure without being overly administratively burdensome.

1.4. Knock-on impacts on local authorities

Drinks containers (particularly aluminium cans) are among the highest value materials which currently end up in household recycling. Their displacement from this recycling stream into a distinct DRS stream will have a significant impact on the economics of household waste collections provided by local authorities. This is important to consider, as the success of a DRS is tied intimately with the success of recycling on a national level.

Figure 6: Flows of materials through local authority streams with a DRS system. Reproduced from an LGA and Valpak report[18]



Work carried out in 2025 by Valpak on behalf of the Local Government Association found that the estimated net income for local authorities in England from management of DRS materials will fall by £52.7 million once DRS goes live[18]. While there may be some savings associated with reduced litter and the increased capacity in collection vehicles for additional materials which must be collected under the Simpler Recycling reforms in England, the experience in the Republic of Ireland indicates that overall litter reduction is not guaranteed (see section 3.3 for more on this).

As such, the economic sustainability of the DRS system must encompass not just the financial flows in which the DMO is directly involved but also those which are indirectly related. The DMO can support local authorities by allowing them to redeem deposits from DRS materials which arise in household waste collections, although the drinks containers would need to be of the same quality as those deposited via reverse vending machines. This would likely require separation in a MRF to ensure only eligible drinks containers were sorted, plus labels would still need to be intact and barcodes readable for deposits to be redeemed.

Key points

Funding of the Deposit Management Organisation

- A DRS operator is generally funded by producer fees, sale of collected materials and unredeemed deposits.
- It is vital that the scheme is designed not to rely on income from unredeemed deposits. Otherwise, there is a perverse incentive for low scheme uptake.
- A not-for-profit DMO reduces that risk, making it more likely that unredeemed deposit levels will be self-minimising.

Setting the right deposit level

- Too high a deposit may reduce sales or alter formats, while too low a deposit may not sufficiently incentivise DRS participation.
- Experience in other countries suggests that higher deposit levels generally result in higher return rates.
- Deposit levels will affect the revenue of the DMO from unredeemed deposits, but this should not be a primary consideration.

Managing deposit flows

- The need for instant refunds poses a potential cashflow risk for return point operators.
- The DMO must set appropriate settlement timeframes to mitigate this risk, balanced against the administrative burden as appropriate.

Knock-on effects

- The economic sustainability of the DRS must consider indirectly related systems, including the viability local authority household waste collections.

2. Balance of Convenience

For maximum scheme uptake by the public, the DRS must be straightforward and hassle-free. This implies a comprehensive network of return points, instant refunds in a range of formats, and an easily understood scope of items included. These elements must be weighed against environmental and social outcomes to ensure that the DRS will fulfil its broad purpose of improving the UK's environmental performance.

2.1. Types of return points

The term DRS can often evoke reverse vending machines and over-the-counter returns at retailers – indeed, this is the form that all current national deposit return schemes take. With the right combination of factors, traditional DRS can achieve impressive return rates of over 90%, as evidenced in Germany and Norway, for example. However, other nations using this form of DRS have experienced low return rates, notably in the US states of Massachusetts (35% in 2024) and Connecticut (65% in 2024, up from 44% in 2023)[19,20].

One proposed way of improving engagement with DRS is to employ Digital DRS (DDRS) which allows consumers to redeem their deposits when disposing of containers in household recycling or on-the-go bins. There have been numerous trials of DDRS in the UK and globally, with mixed success[21]. While users generally find recycling at home more convenient – saving time and additional journeys – there is a risk of greater material contamination and potential fraud.

Valpak's DDRS white paper explores the benefits and challenges of DDRS in more detail[21]. One key concern with traditional DRS in the UK is the environmental impact of installing a network of some 20,000 to 40,000 reverse vending machines, which require significant material and energy resource to manufacture and maintain. Assessments of the lifecycle impacts of reverse vending machines are not typically publicly available but will be a vital consideration in terms of the environmental success of the scheme as a whole.

2.2 Distribution of return points

The participation of many users of the DRS will be contingent on accessibility. If they need to make a special or long journey to return containers or wait in line to use a reverse vending machine, there is a significant risk of non-participation. Digital options aside, the best way to prevent this is to have a comprehensive network of return points in locations consumers would be likely to visit anyway – primarily grocery retailers, but potentially also train stations, schools, shopping centres and similar. The optimal distribution of these locations will be a balance of convenience, cost and resource use.

A hypothetical basic DRS network based on a return point at every store of the largest UK supermarket retailers[22] would have approximately 20,000 return points, serving an average of c. 3,000 people per return point. Analysis reveals that 99.6% of UK residents would have access to a return point within 5 miles of their home, with 91% living within one mile, or an approximately 20 minute walk, of a return point, as shown in Figure 7. The most intensely used return points (i.e. those with the largest number of people for whom that return point is their nearest) would likely be in the Midlands and London, as Figure 8 illustrates.

Irish supermarket chains such as SuperValu and Dunnes Stores have not been included in this analysis but have a significant presence in Northern Ireland and would be obligated to host return points. The number of people using each return point in Northern Ireland is therefore overestimated in this analysis, and the actual system would require very careful consideration of cultural and geographic factors when designing the return point network.

Figure 7: Proximity of UK residents to their nearest return point for a hypothetical return network with a return point at every major UK supermarket retailer outlet.

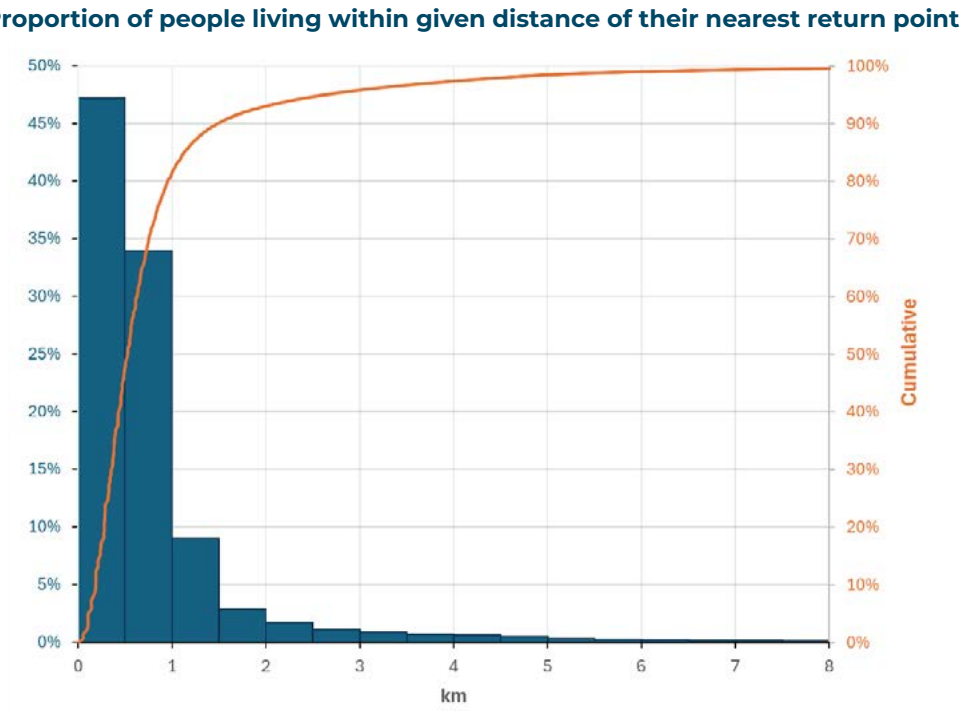
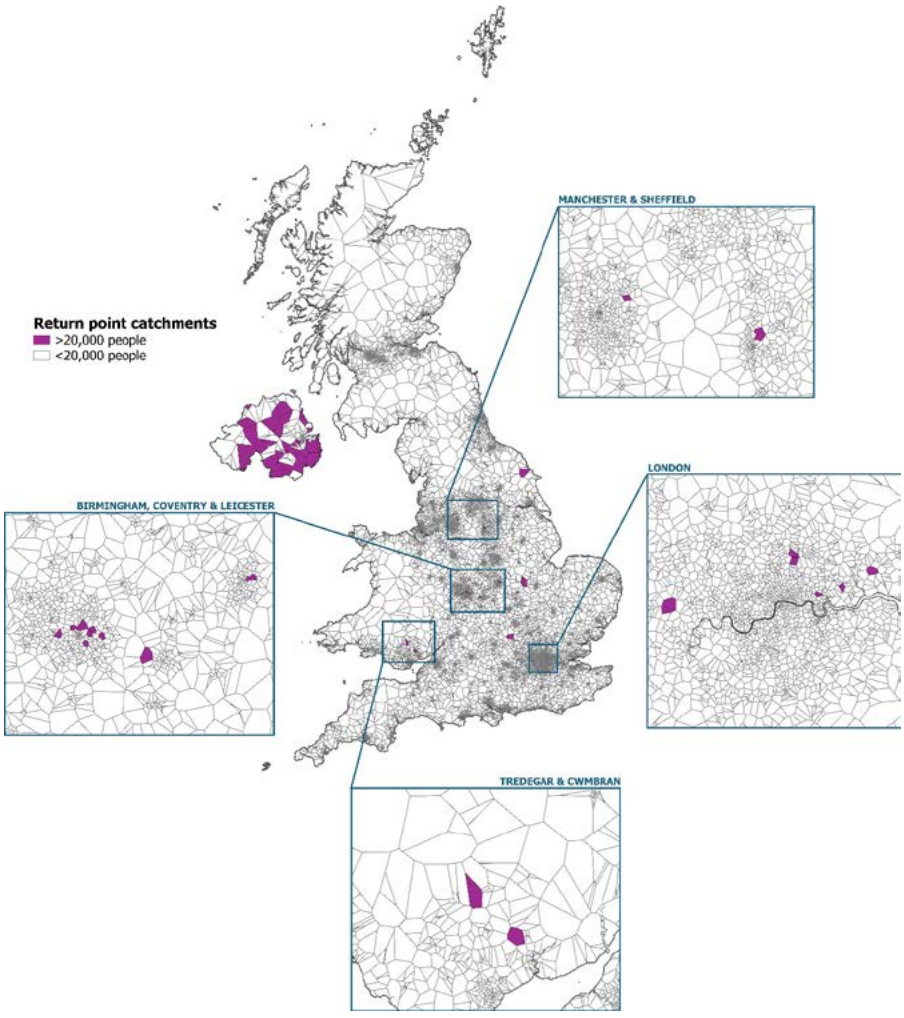


Figure 8: Return point catchments based on a network of return points hosted at major supermarket chains. A catchment is defined as the region surrounding a return point in which that return point is the nearest one (Voronoi cell). Catchments in which more than 20,000 people live are shaded in purple.



This analysis underlines the challenge of ensuring geographically balanced access to DRS return points. There is a requirement for all retailers selling drinks to host a return point unless otherwise exempt. However, the sparse distribution of populations in rural areas means a balance should be struck between ensuring people have a return point nearby and ensuring that each return point is used by enough people to be economically and environmentally worthwhile. Access to internet signal will also be a factor, as reverse vending machines will need to be online to access and amend the DRS database to prevent fraud[23], which may pose a challenge in remote communities. A poorly designed scheme could act in effect as a tax on rural communities if it is impractical for them to participate, or may contribute to them using larger stores in urban areas for both shopping and returns rather than local rural stores. The relative rurality of Scotland and Wales may mean that a DDRS or hybrid DRS would be the most inclusive approach by avoiding the need for additional travel, but England would likely require the same approach if equity of schemes across all UK nations is to be achieved.

Meanwhile in urban areas, while people may live very close to a return point, they may share this return point with a large number of other people, meaning installing the right number of reverse vending machines at each return point will be the most important consideration. Logistics may also prove challenging in urban centres, as additional collection and maintenance vehicles may need to navigate pedestrianised, congested and time-restricted streets. Public locations such as motorway services, shopping centres and train and bus stations could host additional return points to fill gaps in coverage and/or provide a convenient location for the return of on-the-go containers.

In summary, major supermarket chains are well placed to provide the backbone of an accessible network of return points, but rural communities may be less well served.

2.3. Scope

The scope of materials included in the DRS will determine not just the scale of impact but the convenience of using the scheme. All UK schemes are set to include single-use drinks containers between 150ml and 3l made primarily of aluminium, steel or PET plastic. In Wales, the DRS is currently anticipated to also include glass bottles and reusable containers[24]. Wales's inclusion of glass is intended to support future efforts to implement reuse schemes: however, the discrepancy between Wales and the rest of the UK raises the risk of fraud and consumer confusion. The inclusion of glass, being so much heavier and more difficult to handle and separate than combined plastic and metal streams, also requires different reverse vending machine specifications and collections logistics, which complicates the considerations outlined in the previous section.

While current expectation is that a 20p deposit will apply to all containers within scope of the DRS, there is an alternative approach whereby larger containers attract larger deposits. Ireland has a two-tier system for example, with containers from 150ml to 500ml inclusive attracting a 15c deposit compared to 25c for those between 500ml and 3l. This recognises that not all containers are worth the same, but risks complicating the mental maths required of consumers when evaluating the benefits of participation.

Key points

Types of return points

- Both traditional and digital DRS approaches are available. Digital DRS options may be more inclusive for rural communities.
- Reverse vending machines are large and complex machinery, and their full environmental impact should be evaluated before their nationwide rollout is mandated in the name of environmental benefit.

Return point network

- A basic DRS return point network hosted by the ten largest UK supermarket retailers would mean 99.6% of UK residents had access to a return point within 5 miles of their home.
- Different considerations will be due in regions of very low and high population density to determine the optimal distribution of return points.

Scope

- Decisions regarding the variation of deposits by size of container and inclusion or exclusion of glass will influence consumer behaviour.

3. Materials Balance

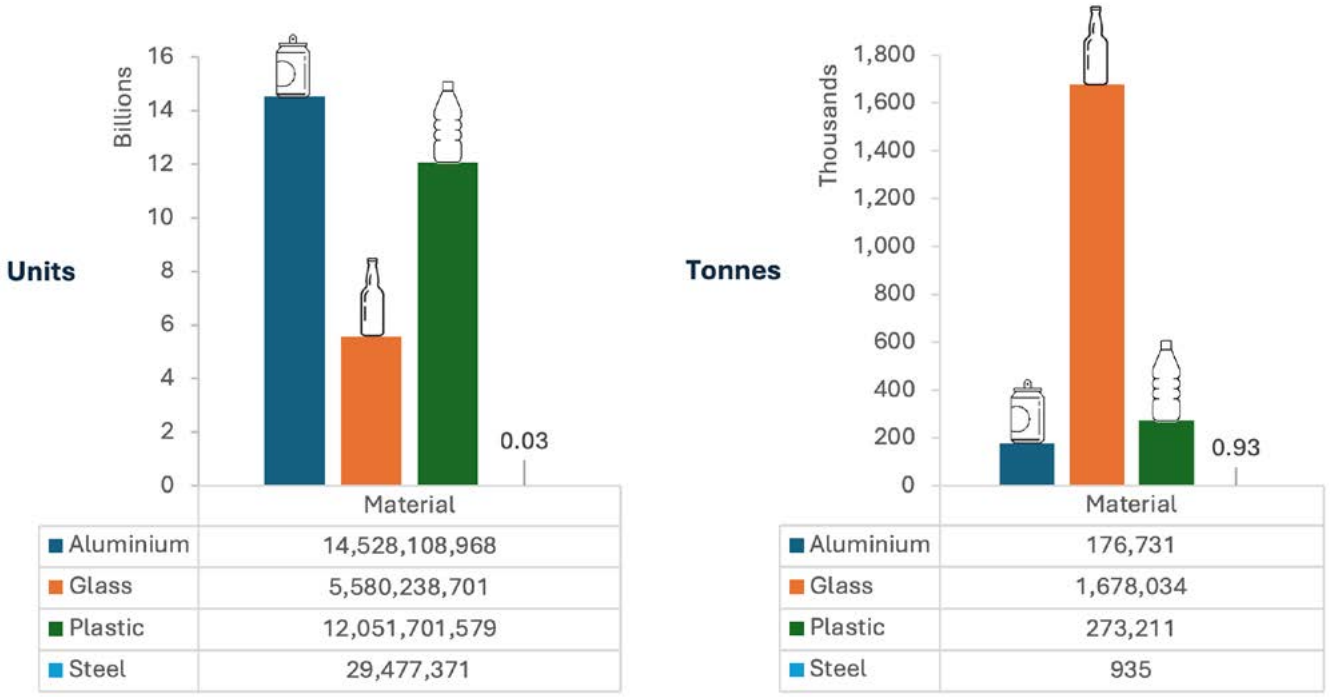
Fundamentally, DRS is about managing the flow of physical material, aiding the transformation from a linear 'take-make-waste' flow to a circular system. A truly circular system requires inputs and outputs to be balanced, and making this happen requires robust and frequent data.

3.1 POM

Setting and tracking targets for recycling rates – in other words, monitoring whether the DRS is improving UK recycling performance – rests on robust, regular data regarding the containers which are placed on the UK market (POM). Existing reporting requirements for the packaging waste regulations and pEPR mean this data already exists and there is a strong understanding of the balance of materials which fall within scope of the DRS.

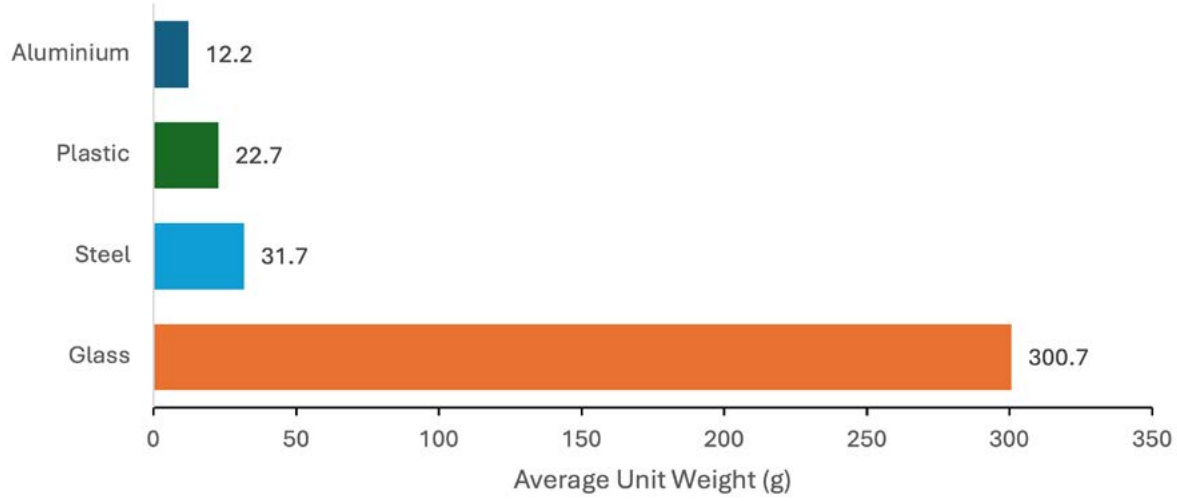
Data from the National Packaging Waste Database (NPWD) shows the following breakdown of drinks containers placed on the UK market in 2024 by units and tonnages[25].

Figure 9: Single-use drinks containers placed on the UK market in 2024.



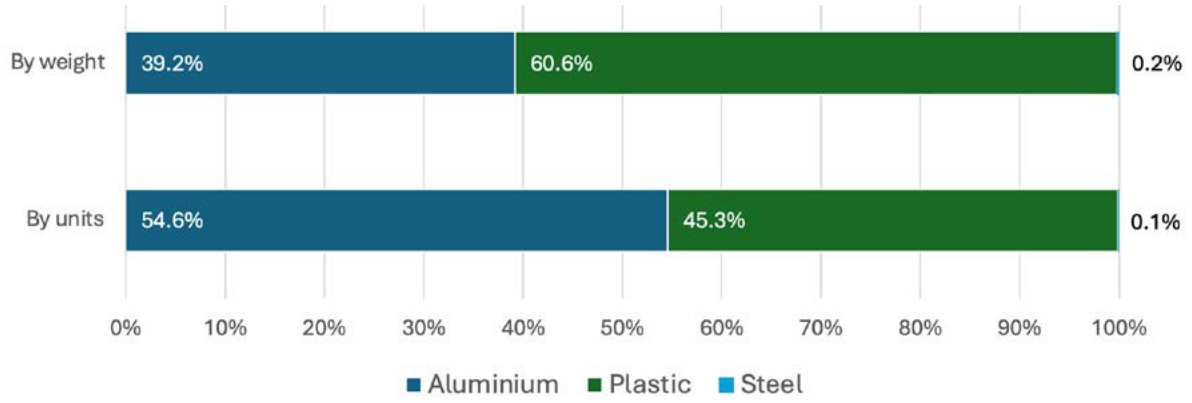
While glass drinks containers constituted 17% of the 32.2 billion drinks units placed on the market in 2024, they represented 79% of the total weight. This is due to the much greater weight per unit of glass containers (Figure 10).

Figure 10: Average weight of units in each material, calculated from NPWD data from 2024



When glass is excluded – as is expected to be the case for DRS in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland at least – the breakdown of material in which drinks containers are placed on the market is as shown in Figure 11..

Figure 11: Proportions of non-glass drinks containers placed on the UK market in 2024, by material.



As with pEPR, accurate and timely reporting of POM data is critical for ensuring that appropriate producer fees are set, and that the infrastructure capacity exists to capture and process the material at the end of its life.

3.2 Recovery and Recycling

Recycling data from the NPWD shows that the following amounts of drinks containers were recycled in 2024.

Table 1: Recycling (i.e. amounts accepted for UK reprocessing or exported for reprocessing) of DRS material types from NPWD.

NPWD Category		
	Aluminium cans & associated packaging	**Plastic: PET Bottles**
Tonnes Recycled (2024)	**114,462**	**168,607**

If these are assumed to correspond directly to the DRS categories, this implies the following recycling rates in 2024. This is not an entirely accurate assumption as drinks containers will represent only a proportion of the containers included in this category. More detailed analysis can be found in the Valpak/LGA DRS impact modelling report

Table 2: Approximate recycling rates for drinks containers in 2024.

	Aluminium cans	**Plastic bottles**
Recycling rate	**64.8%**	**72.9%**

The DMO will be held accountable for achieving return rate targets, expected to reach 90% by year three[26]. This may include fines for missed targets. It may be the case that aluminium and plastic containers are returned at different rates. For instance, aluminium cans purchased on the go, being generally non-resealable, may be more likely to be returned in the same outing whereas an equivalent plastic bottle may be taken home to finish and be disposed of in the household stream. If glass is included in a DRS, glass return rates may be lower due to breakage or the greater likelihood of consumption at home. There is a minimum target of 85% for each material in year 3 of operation, with an overall target of 90%, to discourage low recycling rates of any particular material..

The government currently sets annual recycling rate targets for industry, split by packaging material. In 2025, the target is 61% for aluminium packaging and 55% for plastic[27]. These targets inform the amount obligated businesses must pay under pEPR and the packaging waste regulations to contribute to the recovery and reprocessing of the packaging they place on the market. These targets will be split into overall, DRS and pEPR targets once the DRS is implemented to reflect the fact that DRS materials are already recycled at a higher rate than other materials.

Producers will not be obligated to purchase PRNs on DRS materials captured by the DRS system once it is live. However, the full interaction between DRS and the PRN system is not yet finalised and is being considered as part of reforms to the PRN system[28]. If reprocessors are to be able to issue PRNs for recycled DRS materials which come from a non-DRS stream (as might be the case if no attempt is made to segregate DRS materials at a MRF), this may result in an oversupply of plastic and aluminium PRNs which would suppress the market rate. To prevent this, producers could be obligated to purchase PRNs for unreturned DRS containers based on overall return rates. Alternatively, MRFs and local authorities could be permitted to redeem deposits for any DRS containers of suitable quality if separated from other recyclate.

3.3 Litter

A key ambition of the DRS legislation is to reduce the littering of packaging items. This will increase the amount of material recovered and increase the quantity of reprocessed material available to use in the manufacturing stage, improving circularity. Additionally, in the government's impact assessment, 'reduction of disamenity from litter' accounts for a large proportion of the financial benefits of a DRS[29]. It stands to reason that a financial punishment for not recycling specific items will reduce littering of those items, but this does not necessarily reduce littering in general.

There is good evidence to support the claim that a DRS can reduce littering of drinks containers[30]. A survey by An Taisce found that the prevalence of bottles and cans in ground litter fell by nearly half after the introduction of a DRS in the Republic of Ireland[31]. However, overall litter levels were unchanged. While items within scope of the DRS may be less frequently littered, there is anecdotal evidence that the inflated value of in-scope items can lead to 'scavenging' in public bins, with out-of-scope items left strewn[32]. While this may account for some of the effect observed by An Taisce, it is also likely that other trends contributed, such as the increasing prevalence of vapes.

Key points

Placed on the market

- Reporting obligations under EPR mean producers are already well placed to report accurate POM data.
- This data will underpin infrastructure decisions and the setting and monitoring of recycling targets.
- 2024 data shows that the inclusion or exclusion of glass has an enormous impact on the weight of material collected.

Recovery and recycling

- 2024 data shows that recycling rates of aluminium and plastic drinks containers are already above average for those materials and strong participation in the DRS will be required to raise them.
- Material-specific return rate targets could be considered if it is found that there is a large disparity between plastic and aluminium containers.
- To avoid a surplus of PRNs, MRFs and local authorities could be permitted to redeem deposits from DRS containers segregated post-collection, or DRS producers could receive PRN obligations on unredeemed containers.

Litter

- There is evidence that a DRS can reduce the prevalence of drinks containers in ground litter.
- It is not clear whether a DRS causes an overall reduction in litter, as the reduction in littering of in-scope containers may be negated by an associated rise in littering of out-of-scope items.
- Benefits from the reduction of litter should not be assumed and must be closely monitored.

4. Summary and Recommendations

This paper has identified a number of trade-offs which must be considered for a successful DRS ecosystem in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. These have been divided into economic, behavioural and material balances which must be struck, but every decision made will ultimately ripple through all three aspects. It is enlightening to consider which decisions could result in synergies and which may cause contradictory or perverse effects.

Synergies

- The higher the return rate, the greater the financial benefit
  - Due to possible fines for missed returns targets and mandatory re-investment, it is always in the DMO's best financial interest to maximise DRS participation.
  - Consumers will tend to minimise the economic impact on themselves by returning containers (with the exception of some instances where additional journeys would be required).
  - The larger the supply of reprocessed DRS materials, the lower the cost of using post-consumer recycled content in manufacturing, reducing costs for producers under the UK plastic packaging tax[33].
  - Higher return rates can (but do not necessarily) mean reduced litter, which can provide disamenity cost savings for local authorities.
- The higher the deposit value, the better the environmental outcome
  - There is no evidence yet of a 'ceiling' in terms of how the participation rate scales with the value of the deposit assigned to DRS containers. While consumers may not like paying a large deposit, their financial motivation to participate would be greater.
  - Environmental benefits can also be expected to scale directly with the value of the deposit (with a preference for round numbers of pence), as even if the value were so high as to deter purchases, this would reduce the use of materials in the first place.
  - An exception to this is where high deposit values incentivise bin 'scavenging', increasing littering of out-of-scope items.
- Allowing deposits to be redeemed on containers recovered from non-DRS waste streams helps multiple issues
  - This would make return rate targets more achievable.
  - This would mitigate some of the financial loss to local authorities from diverted DRS materials.
  - This would reduce market distortion effects from raising PRNs on DRS materials which end up in a non-DRS stream.

Contradictions

- A 100% return rate in a traditional DRS may not, somewhat perversely be the best environmental outcome
  - While a fully circular scheme would reduce littering of in-scope containers to zero, the environmental benefit may be outweighed by the significant burden of manufacturing, servicing and operating the network of reverse vending machines required to make it possible.
  - A 100% return rate in a traditional DRS system would likely require special and additional vehicular journeys by consumers and collections and maintenance vehicles, with associated exhaust emissions. A DDRS option may avoid the need for these additional journeys.

Environmental and financial interests will in some instances compete, and decisions will need to be made as to which are prioritised. The point of recycling is to reduce our collective impact on the natural world – and it will be critical to keep sight of this.

Numbered References

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[13]National Packaging Waste Database data for the UK from 2024 shows that the average weight (total weight of units divided by total units sold) of an aluminium drinks container was 12.2g. Multiplying this weight by the number of aluminium containers returned according to the Re-turn 2024 annual report (444,643,705, or ~83 per person assuming a population of 5.38 million) indicates the total tonnage of aluminium collected (5,425t). The tonnage of plastic collected (13,468t) can then be deduced as the difference between the total amount of material collected as stated in the Re-turn report (18,893t) and the tonnage of aluminium. The ratio of these material tonnages can then be multiplied by the ratio of their approximate values as extracted from letsrecycle.com (https://www.letsrecycle.com/prices/metals/aluminium-cans/aluminium-can-prices-2024/; https://www.letsrecycle.com/prices/plastics/plastic-bottles/plastic-bottles-2024/) to estimate the proportion of income which can be attributed to each material.

[14]While industry is likely to oppose any initiative which threatens to reduce sales, some may argue that a reduction in sales would contribute to the aims of the legislation anyway – as packaging which has not been bought cannot be littered, and prevention of material use is more environmentally beneficial than recycling.

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