

Changes to Deposit Return Scheme announced

In a statement to The Scottish Parliament on Thursday afternoon Circular Economy Minister, Lorna Slater, announced some new measures which are intended to help craft drinks producers and off-sales in pubs.

She also outlined measures to make it easier for all affected businesses – drinks producers and retailers – to prepare for the scheme which is now delayed until next year.

The government is still keen to ensure that there are environmental benefits, and continues to blame the UK Government who have not issued an exclusion for the scheme from the Internal Markets Act.

The changes announced are:

- drinks containers of under 100ml will be excluded, removing miniatures and other smaller containers from the scheme
- products that sell fewer than 5,000 units per year will be excluded, which will particularly benefit craft producers
- all hospitality premises that sell the large majority of their drinks products for consumption on the premises will be exempt from acting as a return point

- the online application process for retailers to apply for an exemption from providing a return point has been simplified

Ms Slater said: “Scotland’s deposit return scheme will reduce litter on our streets, massively increase the recycling of drinks containers and help meet our net zero ambitions.

“However, to realise these benefits DRS needs to be delivered in a way that works for businesses, especially for small drinks producers. The changes I have set out will make the scheme easier for industry to deliver – especially for craft producers – while still making sure the vast majority of drinks containers are captured for recycling.

“To move forward with certainty, the UK Government must stop delaying the long overdue exclusion from the Internal Market Act. This damaging Act was imposed on the Scottish Parliament after Brexit without its consent and creates confusion and uncertainty for businesses.

“After that Act was passed, we engaged in good faith, following the agreed process, and have done so for nearly two years now to agree an exclusion. The UK Government needs to at long last issue an exclusion, and recognise the right of the Scottish Parliament to enact legislation in devolved areas without interference.”



Circular Economy Minister Lorna Slater