



Department
for Environment,
Food & Rural Affairs

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28th July 2025

Dear Ms Horner,

Thank you for your letter of 2 June to the Chancellor about Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) for drinks containers. Your letter has been passed to Defra. I am replying as the Minister responsible for this policy area and I apologise for the delay in responding. The Chancellor agrees that implementing the government's collection and packaging reforms, including the DRS, is a critical step in this transition that will create a substantial incentive for investment in new and improved recycling services in the UK.

As the Minister responsible for this policy area, I would like to thank you for your continued support of the DRS. Transitioning to a circular economy has the potential to increase the resilience and productivity of the economy, underpinning long-term growth. This is why the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has set this as one of Defra's top five priorities.

As you have expressed in your letter the collection and packaging reforms, Extended Producer Responsibility, Simpler Recycling and the DRS for drinks containers, form an important starting point for a circular economy. This will help increase the use of recycled materials in packaging and encourage investment in the recycling infrastructure which, in turn, will support consumer behaviour change through local and national campaigns. Industry estimates the packaging reforms will create 25,000 jobs and underpin £10 billion of investment in new sorting and processing facilities. The DRS, as you mention at the end of your letter, will boost recycling levels, reduce littering, and offer greater opportunities to collect higher quality, uncontaminated materials in greater quantities.

Organisations such as Reloop, as well as environmental charities such as Keep Britain Tidy, the Marine Conservation Society, and others, play a key role in communicating the benefits of DRS to the public. It is important they understand the core environmental benefits, but also that DRS, and other Circular Economy policies, will act as key drivers for investment and jobs.

Thank you once again for taking the time to contact us about this important issue.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Mg' or 'Mary', written in a cursive style.

MARY CREAGH CBE MP