

## Full Impact Assessments

### A.Children's Rights Impact Assessment

#### 1. Policy objectives

This impact assessment evaluates the implications of introducing a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) for drinks containers in Wales. Under the scheme, consumers will pay a refundable deposit when purchasing an in-scope container, which they can reclaim by returning the container. Returns can be made over the counter at participating retailers or via Reverse Vending Machines (RVMs).

The Welsh Government expects that the Deposit Management Organisation (DMO), responsible for operating the scheme, will ensure that return points are conveniently located and easily accessible across Wales. These will typically include shops selling in-scope drinks, as well as public venues such as libraries, community centres, and transport hubs.

The DRS is expected to deliver benefits for children and young people by supporting the Well-being Goals for Children and Young People in Wales as follows:

#### **A Prosperous Wales**

The DRS will accelerate Wales' transition to a circular, low carbon economy by improving resource efficiency and increasing recycling rates, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and supporting the transition to reuse. By keeping valuable materials in use, the scheme reduces waste and stimulates investment in collection and reprocessing infrastructure, creating economic opportunities and green jobs.

#### **A Resilient Wales**

By reducing the need for virgin raw materials, whose extraction are a root cause of the global biodiversity crisis, the DRS will directly contribute to action on the nature crisis. By reducing waste the scheme will reduce landfill and incineration, and by reducing litter, also prevent material polluting Wales' natural environment and impacting on our biodiversity. By improving the domestic availability of high quality recycled material, it will also support improved supply chain resilience.

#### **A Healthier Wales**

Cleaner streets and public spaces reduce the visual blight and disamenity caused by litter, supporting mental well-being. Additionally the scheme could help reduce the consumption of sugary drinks, contributing to healthier weights and improved dental health among children and young people.

#### **A Wales of Cohesive Communities**

The scheme enhances the attractiveness and liveability of communities by tackling littering and its negative impacts. This fosters pride in local areas and strengthens community cohesion. Communities will also benefit from people being able to donate their deposits to charities.

#### **A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language**

Wales is already recognised as a global leader in recycling. A DRS will build on this

success, driving recycling rates even higher and embedding sustainability as a core part of Welsh culture—something communities can take pride in.

### **A Globally Responsible Wales**

By reducing reliance on imported virgin materials and limiting the export of waste for treatment, the DRS helps protect ecosystems worldwide. This reduces harmful practices such as mining and deforestation, while increasing recycling also reduces the material which goes to incineration, landfill or the export of waste.

### **A More Equal Wales**

Litter disproportionately affects communities with higher deprivation levels. By reducing litter and its associated disamenity, the DRS helps create fairer and cleaner environments for all. The scheme also empowers individuals to contribute to these outcomes by returning containers and reclaiming deposits.

### **Research and data**

To inform the development of the scheme, we have used the following research and evidence, including:

- [Wales Report: Consumer research to inform the design of an effective deposit return scheme, Kantar](#)
- [Consumer Research to Inform Design of an Effective Deposit Return Scheme, Kantar](#)
- [Quantifying and exploring the potential impact of a future Deposit Return Scheme, Systra](#)
- [Littering and Plastic Waste, Littering and Plastic Waste Committee, Wales Youth Parliament](#)
- [Circular Economies and Sustainable Health and Well-being : The public health impact of public bodies refocusing on waste reduction and reuse in Wales Summary Report, Public Health Wales](#)
- [Earnings and hours worked, age group: ASHE Table 6 - Office for National Statistics](#)
- [UK packaging producer responsibility system reform: partial equality impact assessment, Scottish Government](#)
- [Analysis of protected characteristics by area deprivation: 2017 to 2019, Welsh Government](#)
- [The Environmental Protection \(Single-use Vapes\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2024: children's rights impact assessment, Welsh Government](#)
- [General health and illness by year, 2016-17 to 2019-20, National Survey of Wales 2020](#)

- [Equality and diversity statistics: 2018 to 2020, Welsh Government](#)
- [Healthy Weight: Healthy Wales, Welsh Government](#)
- [The Environmental Protection \(Single-use Plastic Products\) \(Wales\) Bill: children's rights impact assessment, Welsh Government](#)
- [The Environmental Protection \(Single-use Vapes\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2024: children's rights impact assessment, Welsh Government](#)
- [Approximated Social Grade, England and Wales, Office for National Statistics](#)
- [A 30 percent plus reuse future for UK report, GoUnpackaged](#)

### **Consultation**

Views were sought on the commitment to a DRS in a twelve week formal public consultation from December 2019 to April 2020 linked to our wider resource efficiency and circular economy strategy – Beyond Recycling, including an Easy Read version. This consultation included over 40 engagement events, which took place across Wales and beyond, with one event in London. These events and the written consultation actively engaged around 1,000 citizens and stakeholders, including children and young people.

Engagement events were held separately with primary school children, secondary school children, college students and university students across Wales. The then minister engaged with children at two Little Voices conferences in north and south Wales. 'Little Voices Shouting Out / Lleisiau Bach Yn Galw' made history by giving children under the age of 11 an opportunity to present their findings to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Officials and the then Deputy Minister for Climate Change also visited primary schools during the 2019-20 Beyond Recycling consultation period– inviting suggestions from the children e.g. suggestions included “Why don't we provide free school meals for every child because then mummies and daddies would stop putting plastic in their lunch boxes”. Older students were engaged with in meetings at the University of Bangor and Pembrokeshire College. Comments included that the young people at Pembrokeshire College recognised that they did not usually carry a reusable water bottle because it was seen as an inconvenience. They also said they would feel motivated to participate in circular economy initiatives such as a DRS if they were rewarded in doing so, for example by returning a container to redeem the deposit.

Two further public consultations specifically about DRS were held in 2019 and 2021 which sought the views of all sections of society on the proposed scheme. The first consultation asked people's views on introducing a DRS. As this proposal received overwhelming public support, the second consultation requested people's views on more detailed options for such a scheme. Due to the technical nature of the proposed scheme, there were no consultation events specifically for children and young people.

The Welsh Government's DRS Policy Team initiated continuous stakeholder engagement throughout the development of the scheme, working closely with representatives from industry, the third sector and the public sector. The purpose of this engagement was to understand the potential impacts of the scheme and ensure that diverse perspectives informed policy design.

As part of this process, a major stakeholder conference was held on 6 March 2025, bringing together a wide range of participants. The event featured interactive workshops focused on assessing the impacts of the scheme, fostering collaboration and gathering valuable insights to shape its implementation.

A public consultation was held from 18 August to 10 November 2025 on the Deposit Return Scheme and the transition to reuse. To ensure accessibility and inclusivity, the consultation included an Easy Read version and a Youth-Friendly document, designed to make the proposals clear and engaging for all audiences. These formats were widely praised by industry stakeholders for their commitment to inclusivity and for enabling broader participation in shaping the policy. Of the 287 responses received to the consultation, 7 responses were received on the Youth Friendly response form and 5 on the Easy Read form.

## 2. Analysing the evidence and assessing the impact

- Using the evidence you have gathered, what impact is your policy likely to have on children and young people? What steps will you take to mitigate and/or reduce any negative effects?

The Welsh Youth Parliament's report and research by Kantar and Systra suggest that many children and young people will want to and are willing to participate in the DRS. However, the research also suggests that some may have concerns about the scheme. These impacts and measures to mitigate them are discussed below.

### **Circular economy and environmental benefits**

Children and young people will benefit from the scheme as a result of its positive impact on the environment and move towards a more circular economy.

The [Wales Report: Consumer research to inform the design of an effective deposit return scheme](#) by Kantar found that, similarly to adults, 66% of surveyed children aged 11 to 15 agreed that it would be easy to fit this new method of disposing of drinks containers into their everyday life, 10% would find it difficult and 84% agreed that any extra effort would be worthwhile to help protect the environment.

Although it did not refer to DRS directly, the Welsh Youth Parliament's 'Reduce, Reuse, Recycle' report suggests that children and young people favour the circular economy aims with which the DRS aligns. Its findings include:

- 87% of Welsh youth think that reducing, reusing and recycling waste is important to them.
- A large proportion of those surveyed felt it was important to reduce, reuse and recycle litter and plastic waste at home (87%), when out with family or friends (84%), and at school (84%).

- 85% are confident that they know what they can recycle.
- 67% of young people know of other ways to reduce littering and plastic waste aside from recycling.
- 38% would choose items with less packaging.
- 12% would file a complaint or shop elsewhere if a company/ organisation did not handle its waste responsibly.
- They also saw written survey responses that young people wanted to see shops and producers doing more to respond to reuse and recycling. There was reference to the need to reduce packaging, for shops to offer refilling stations and use biodegradable packaging.

The climate and nature emergency is one of the most pressing challenges facing future generations. Under the DRS, the DMO will be expected to develop and implement a communication and engagement strategy to support business and consumer readiness. This is to include how and where containers can be recycled and the amount of recycled content included. This will help raise awareness among children and young people, empowering them to actively contribute to the scheme's goal of increasing recycling rates.

By promoting a circular economy, the DRS will create a cleaner, more sustainable and prosperous environment for children and young people in Wales. It will also deliver wider benefits for families by generating green jobs, stimulating innovation, and creating opportunities for skills development and qualifications in the growing resource efficiency sector.

### **Disability, transport, social class and housing**

The research by Kantar and Systra identified the following issues relating to access to transport, social class, housing and disability which could affect how people interact with a DRS. These issues could affect children and young people directly, or indirectly, because of their families' circumstances.

Systra's [Quantifying and exploring the potential impact of a future Deposit Return Scheme](#) found that:

- Disabled people, those with less available space in their home and those who use public transport to do their usual food shopping are likely to have more unclaimed deposits than their counterparts.
- Disabled people with mobility impairments may find it difficult to travel to / transport containers to physical return points especially for those reliant on online shopping.
- Some older people and disabled people may have difficulty transporting multiple containers to return points due to lack of transport, disability, age or illness. This could impact disabled children and young people or children and young people in families with older or disabled people.
- Disabled people would be affected by upfront price incurred when purchasing in bulk online and the additional burden of storage that comes with buying in bulk.

Kantar's [Consumer Research to Inform Design of an Effective Deposit Return Scheme](#) found that:

- People in [social grades DE](#) were more likely to cite a lack of transportation as the reason they would not use the DRS and more likely to cite being disabled / mobility impairments in accessing a return point. They were also more likely to reduce purchases of cans and small plastic bottles to avoid the deposit for drinks consumed at home.
- Kantar's [Wales Report: Consumer research to inform the design of an effective deposit return scheme](#) found that:
- Difficulty in accessing return points was cited by 14% of respondents due to lack of transport and by 11% due to age, disability or mobility.

A DRS may create additional challenges for some households, including families with children and young people who do not own a car or do not live near accessible public transport. These families may need to find alternative ways to travel to return points or lose their deposits.

Space constraints could also affect people living in smaller homes, as they may have limited room to store empty containers. While some individuals may store containers in their car until they visit a return point, this option is not available to those without vehicles.

There are two key mitigations for these impacts:

1. Flexibility in returns – People can return containers to any return point, not just the retailer where the container was purchased.
2. Extensive return point network – The Welsh Government expects the DMO to establish, implement and manage a comprehensive return point network across Wales in order to ensure locations are convenient and easily accessible in both urban and rural areas. Return points will typically include shops selling in scope drinks, as well as public venues such as libraries, community centres, transport hubs, shopping centres and other suitable public spaces.

Additionally, scheme suppliers and retailers may apply to host return points or offer services to assist people in returning containers which would further improve accessibility.

Children and young people could benefit from new jobs created by the scheme if they have one or more parents, guardians or other family members who are out of work. GoUnpackaged's [A 30 percent plus reuse future for UK report](#) estimated that the scheme will create an additional 13,000 jobs across the UK, including Wales, in the waste management and recycling sector.

A DRS could also bring together communities to raise funds for charities / community groups through donation of deposits.

### **Accessibility of return points**

A general principle of the scheme is that anyone who is able to carry a full bottle or can home from a retailer is assumed to also be able to return empty containers back to a return point. However, the [Wales Report: Consumer research to inform](#)



the design of an effective deposit return scheme, Kantar includes the following findings about accessibility of return points for children and young people:

- The main reason why surveyed children and young people aged 11-15 would not always use a DRS away from home was the same as for adults which is that they might not have the time to find a return point with over half (54%) selecting this option. The other main reason was not wanting to carry the empty containers with just under half selecting this option (48%).
- Mini supermarkets and large supermarkets were the most convenient return points for surveyed children and young people aged 11-15 (57% and 56% respectively). A machine at a park or other public space (52%), a leisure centre or library (34%) and at a transport station (29%) were also seen as convenient by sizable groups of child survey participants (see figure 6.8).

Children and young people might also find it harder to return their empty containers to shops due to their lack of transport and dependence on guardians for travelling to supermarkets. This is particularly important for children and young people in lower socio-economic groups, who are disabled, in families without regular access to a car, as well as those in rural areas or living in accommodation with limited storage space for containers.

### **Mitigations to make return points accessible**

The impacts identified above highlight that the accessibility and location of return points will be important in enabling children and young people to participate in the scheme.

The scheme will include the following mitigations to make returning containers as easy as possible:

- Children and young people will be able to return containers at any scheme return point, not just the ones they purchased them from.
- The DMO will be expected, in line with The Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, to ensure accessibility of the scheme by managing the exemptions from hosting return points, the specifications of RVMs, their locations and ensuring that machines cater for all consumers - including children and young people - through for example the height of infrastructure and how equality of access will be managed. In creating the specification for RVMs, the Welsh Government will also expect the DMO to consider the usability of the machines (e.g. height of infrastructure) for all citizens, including children and young people.
- There will be an extensive return point network across urban and rural areas. Factors such as the local geography and demographic make-up of an area will need to be considered – including possibilities for setting up return points in areas of high footfall (e.g. shopping malls and transport hubs). The DMO will also need to review the operation of return points and make adjustments as appropriate, including potentially operating some return points itself.
- Retailers which sell in-scope containers will be obligated to host a return point unless they request and get approval for an exemption. Small retailers in urban areas will automatically be exempt from hosting return points. Before granting any exemptions, the DMO will need to be mindful of any accessibility issues which may

be caused for consumers who want to return containers. The exempted retailer will be required to display signage indicating the exemption, information on the location of the nearest return point.

- The DMO is expected to publish a RVM specification which takes into consideration how RVMs would need to be accessible to all – including, for example, wheelchair users.
- Instructions for the use of RVMs and return points are expected to be user friendly and provided in clear and simple language.

### **Digital DRS solution**

The DMO may choose to implement additional methods for collecting drinks containers. For example, working with Local Authorities to introduce a digital return option, allowing people to redeem deposits by scanning a QR code and disposing of containers through their kerbside recycling service. Research by Kantar and Systra on the potential impacts of the scheme indicate that many people view such a digital option as significantly more convenient than travelling to a physical return point. Findings suggest that this approach could particularly encourage younger people to engage with the scheme.

Accessibility challenges could also be mitigated through community support initiatives. For example, voluntary organisations may offer assistance to families who face difficulties accessing return points due to caring responsibilities or other commitments. This could include services for households that rely on online grocery deliveries, helping them return containers and reclaim deposits.

### **Takeback services**

Retailers may also run additional takeback services to make it easier for people to return containers and redeem deposits at places other than grocery retailers.

### **Labelling**

Children and young people with a physical or mental impairment—such as a learning difficulty or visual impairment—may face challenges in understanding or adapting to changes in recycling instructions on labels introduced by the scheme. The DMO) can help mitigate this by encouraging drinks producers to make labels clear, simple and accessible. Additionally, producers should be encouraged to consult with disabled people and relevant organisations during the design process to ensure labels meet diverse accessibility needs.

### **Litter**

A DRS will have a positive impact on children and young people, and communities by significantly reducing littering of drinks containers and the associated social disamenity.

Evidence from the Scottish Partial Equality Impact Assessment suggests that increasing recycling and reducing littering through a DRS can improve people's perception of their communities—particularly among younger age groups. The assessment found that:

- People aged 16–24 are more likely (35%) to report neighbourhood littering as “very common” or “common,” compared to 27% of those aged 60–74. This indicates that



litter is a social issue that disproportionately affects young people's perception of their own neighbourhood. Measures that reduce littering, such as packaging reforms and DRS, can reasonably be expected to have a positive impact on people's sense of place and community, especially for younger generations.

Although these findings focus on 16–24-year-olds, the benefits of reducing littering are likely to extend to all sections of society, including children and young people. Cleaner streets and public spaces contribute to safer, more attractive environments which fosters community pride and improves overall well-being.

Litter, fly-tipping and other environmental crimes are a blight on our communities. They pose a threat to humans and wildlife, can damage our environment and spoil our enjoyment of our towns and countryside. <sup>Error! Bookmark not defined.</sup> Poor local environmental quality can also have a negative impact on people's mental health and wellbeing, with such anti-social behaviour often resulting in an area appearing run-down and neglected. This can result in further anti-social behaviour or crimes that are even more serious. These types of offences often disproportionately affect deprived communities.

## **Health**

The scheme will directly promote Article 24 of the UNCRC and will help to alleviate significant concerns relating to a clean environment. Article 24 states:

“Children have the right to good quality health care and to clean water, nutritious food and a clean environment so that they will stay healthy. Rich countries should help poorer countries achieve this.”

Under a DRS, children and young people will need to pay a deposit on any in-scope drinks container they purchase. However, they will still have free access to clean, high-quality water through taps, ensuring hydration remains affordable and accessible.

A DRS also supports Wales' broader circular economy goals by contributing to a cleaner, greener and healthier environment for future generations. A Health Impact Assessment by Public Health Wales concluded that a focus on recycling, reducing and reusing waste “would have major, probably positive long-term health benefits at a whole population level in Wales”. These benefits include improved air quality through reduced greenhouse gas emissions from waste collection and management, including those arising through landfill emissions.

By helping to achieve these circular economy objectives, a DRS will indirectly contribute to better health outcomes for people in Wales. Reduced greenhouse gas emissions lower exposure to outdoor air pollution which is particularly beneficial for vulnerable groups such as children and young people, older adults, people with underlying health conditions and those living in areas with higher pollution levels. While the scheme may lead to an increase in material processing facilities and collection services, potentially causing localised emissions from vehicles and operations, these impacts are difficult to quantify and are expected to be outweighed by the significant health and environmental benefits identified in the Public Health Wales report.

### Health benefits of reduced purchasing of in-scope drinks

The scheme could also benefit children and young people by reducing the number of high sugar products that they consume, thereby benefiting their dental and general health. The extent of any reduced consumption will be influenced by the deposit level which will be set by the DMO.

Although deposits can be fully redeemed later by returning the empty container, the deposit will increase the upfront price of in-scope drinks. Children and young people under 16 do not generally have the ability to generate their own income and may, therefore, be less able to afford in-scope drinks. The latest ONS data shows the average income for 16-17 year olds and those aged 18-21 is far lower than those in older age groups.

Kantar's [Wales Report: Consumer research to inform the design of an effective deposit return scheme](#) found that just under half of 16-24 year old and 11-15 year old survey participants (46% and 47% respectively) said a DRS may reduce the number of bottles or cans they buy by a lot or a little. However, only three per cent of children and young people surveyed said they would stop buying these types of containers altogether. As consumers of in-scope drinks containers, children and young people will play a critical role in the deposit return scheme and its contribution to our wider circular economy goals.

The scheme might encourage more children and young people to choose to use water refill points to top up reusable water bottles when they are away from home.

By increasing the upfront price of in-scope drinks the scheme could benefit children and young people by reducing the number of high sugar products that they consume, thereby benefiting their oral and general health. The scheme could complement the Government's Healthy Weight: Healthy Wales Strategy which aims to support healthy diets and for people to achieve and maintain a healthy weight which is key to lifelong health and reducing the burden of non-communicable diseases such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes and some cancers. Dietary goals are represented in the UK Government's Eatwell Guide which shows foods high in sugar are not part of a healthy, balanced diet and should be eaten less often and in small amounts. Reducing sugar intake, particularly in things such as certain drinks, is an important part of improving oral health and reducing tooth decay. However, not all in-scope drinks are less healthy - for example, bottled water. Additionally, the impact may depend on the number of drinks a person consumes.

By reducing litter and plastic pollution, the scheme could also benefit children and young people's health by making clean spaces more attractive to go out, play and exercise in. Reducing littering of drinks containers may also contribute to reducing micro-plastics getting into the air children and young people breathe and the food they eat.

Reducing plastic pollution from littering of drinks containers will also benefit children and young people as they are much more vulnerable to adverse health effects caused by environmental toxins such as plastic. They are still developing – their gut, immune system, brain and reproductive systems are still under construction.

This makes them more prone to the negative impacts of plastic exposure. This will also meet the requirement in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, specifically Article 31 and Article 24, by reducing air pollution and providing cleaner green and natural spaces such as beaches, forests, parks and the countryside for walking, learning, running, cycling and playing.

Climate change has been identified as one of the biggest threats facing our future generations; implementing these proposals will have a direct positive impact on protecting children and young people's environment, health and well-being in the short term and for future generations.

### **Children and young people in families on lower incomes**

The scheme is likely to have a greater financial impact on families with lower incomes compared to those with higher incomes, as the deposit increases the upfront price of drinks. As a result, some families may choose to purchase fewer in-scope drinks. This could lead to positive health outcomes, particularly for children and young people, by reducing consumption of high-sugar beverages – thereby supporting better dental health and lowering sugar intake overall.

There is a risk that being seen to need to reclaim deposits could stigmatise children and young people in low income families.. However, this is mitigated by the fact that deposits will apply to all in-scope purchases and redeeming deposits will be the norm for people from all sections of society, irrespective of income.

### **Impact of price increases on protected characteristic groups and deprivation**

The impact of the initial extra upfront price of drinks under the scheme could also impact children and young people if they or their families have protected characteristics.

The Welsh Government's *Analysis of protected characteristics by area deprivation: 2017 to 2019* report states that females, younger people, Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, disabled people, LGBTQ+ people, people of Muslim faith, people of no religion and single people are all more likely to live in deprived areas as a consequence of low income. As such, children and young people in these groups are likely to be disproportionately affected by price rises resulting from the scheme.

### **Need for strong communications**

Kantar's [Wales Report: Consumer research to inform the design of an effective deposit return scheme](#) includes the following findings:

- Encouraging behaviour change among children and young people is particularly important, given around two thirds (65%) of surveyed children and young people aged 11 to 15 agreed with the statement 'most of my friends throw their empty cans or bottles in general rubbish bins rather than recycle them'.
- Surveyed children and young people aged 11-15 were less likely than adult survey participants to see themselves using a DRS away from home on all occasions (32% to 45% of surveyed children and young people compared with 54% to 59% of adult survey participants depending on the type of container).

Findings suggest that the DMO responsible for implementing the scheme must deliver clear and effective communications to children and young people, and the wider public about the benefits of the scheme, its importance and how to participate..

Regular public communication will be essential both before and after the scheme's launch, primarily led by the DMO to meet its collection targets. Key requirements include:

- **Clarity and Accessibility** – All communications should be in plain language and designed to be accessible for people with limited English or Welsh proficiency and/or learning difficulties.
- **Pre-launch Awareness** – Clear messaging ahead of the scheme going live so consumers understand how it works and how to redeem deposits.
- **Inclusive Channels** – Use both digital and non-digital methods to reach those who regularly use online platforms and those who do not. The DMO should also consider channels such as schools, community hubs and foodbanks to ensure families at greatest risk of exclusion and consequently losing their deposits are effectively reached.
- **Clear Retail Labelling** – Shelves displaying in-scope drinks must be clearly labelled with price information, including the deposit.
- **Product Identification** – In-scope drinks should be easily identifiable through consistent and clear labelling.

UNCRC Articles or Optional Protocol	Enhances (X)	Challenges (X)	Explanation
<u>Article 24 (health and health services)</u> Each child has the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health. States Parties shall strive to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such health care services.	X		<p>The scheme will help to provide a clean environment by increasing recycling of drink container waste, making better use of scarce raw materials and reducing demand for other raw materials sourced from around the globe. By doing so, the scheme will also help provide a healthy environment by reducing mining, destruction of ancient forests and exploitation of other undeveloped habitats - thereby protecting species and biodiversity.</p> <p>The scheme may also benefit children and young people's health by reducing their</p>

<p><u>Article 12 (respect for the views of the child).</u> Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. This right applies at all times, for example during immigration proceedings, housing decisions or the child's day-to-day home life.</p>	X		<p>consumption of high sugar drinks.</p> <p>The consultation on the circular economy strategy 'Beyond Recycling' included discussing a DRS - events were held with primary school children, secondary school children, college students and university students. The then Minister also engaged with children and young people at the Little Voices conferences in north and south Wales.</p> <p>Links to the 2019, 2021 and 2025 consultations on DRS were published on the Welsh Government's website for anyone with an interest to respond, including children and young people. These consultations received strong support for the proposed scheme. Due to the technical nature of the proposed scheme, there were no consultation events specifically for children and young people.</p>
<p><u>Article 13 (freedom of expression).</u> Every child must be free to express their thoughts and opinions and to access all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.</p>	X		<p>Children and young people will have the right to express their views on how the scheme affects them by - for example - contacting their Senedd Members, Welsh Ministers, the Children's Commissioner or the Youth Parliament. The DMO will publicise information about the scheme's operation and an annual report on its performance against its objectives.</p>
<p><u>Article 27</u> Every child has a right to a standard of living adequate for</p>	X		<p>Children and young people who purchase in-scope drinks will be affected by the scheme due to the additional upfront price of</p>

<p>the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.</p> <p><u>Article 23</u> Mentally or physically disabled children should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community.</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>paying the deposit. Although they will be able to redeem the deposit later, the impact on children and young people will be greater because they have lower incomes than other groups and the additional upfront price will represent a greater percentage of their income available.</p> <p>By contributing to increased recycling of drinks containers, children and young people and their families will benefit by helping move Wales towards a more circular economy - thereby contributing to the prosperity of Wales and creating a cleaner, more sustainable and prosperous environment in which the children and young people of Wales live.</p> <p>The scheme is expected to benefit children and young people in families by creating green jobs for their families and providing opportunities for innovation, skills and qualification development.</p> <p>A DRS is expected to positively impact children and young people and communities by reducing littering of drinks containers and the associated social disamenity.</p> <p>The DMO will be expected to take steps to ensure that the scheme is accessible to all, including by ensuring that return points are appropriately located and are suitable to be used by children and young people and their families - including disabled children and young people.</p>
<p><u>Article 31</u> Every child has the right to relax, play</p>	<p>X</p>	

and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.			By reducing litter and plastic pollution, the scheme could also benefit children and young people's health by making clean spaces more attractive to go out, play and exercise in. Reducing littering of drinks containers may also contribute to reducing micro-plastics getting into the air children and young people breathe and the food they eat.
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For further information on the [UNCRC](#) and its Optional Protocols, please visit the [Children's Rights Intranet Page](#).

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Throughout the development of the DRS policy, regular advice has been provided to Ministers on the expected impacts of the scheme. This has been delivered through a combination of formal written advice, policy discussions, roundtable sessions and ongoing stakeholder engagement. These mechanisms ensured that Ministers were kept fully informed and able to make evidence-based decisions at each stage of policy development.

### **3. Communicating with Children and Young People**

Children and young people's views were not sought specifically for this policy. However, research by Kantar and Systra identified ways in which children and young people felt the DRS could affect them.

Children and young people's perspectives were also considered during the development of the wider Beyond Recycling strategy which includes proposals for the DRS. They had opportunities to share their views through two public consultations on the scheme held in 2019 and 2021, and a youth-friendly version of the consultation was produced as part of the 2025 consultation to make the information more accessible and encourage participation from younger audiences.

### **4. Monitoring and Review**

The legislation for the scheme introduces requirements for data collection and reporting which in turn will enable the monitoring and evaluation of the wider scheme.

The DMO will play a central role in the ongoing evaluation of the DRS, ensuring that its operations and outcomes are continuously assessed against agreed objectives. Statutory collection targets will be embedded within the scheme, providing clear benchmarks for performance. Progress towards these targets will be monitored by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) which will act as the regulator for the scheme in Wales. In addition to tracking collection outcomes, NRW will oversee the DMO's compliance with its statutory obligations and operational



standards, ensuring that the scheme delivers its intended environmental and social benefits effectively and transparently.

Local authority trading standards services teams will also have a key role in monitoring the performance and compliance of businesses with their statutory obligations and maintain confidence in the scheme. This includes working collaboratively to provide support to businesses, whilst also responding to complaints and taking appropriate action where necessary to safeguard consumers.

As part of the process for appointing the DMO, applicants will be required to provide robust evidence of how litter reduction outcomes will be achieved as a direct result of the DRS, including through monitoring, reporting, and evaluation mechanisms.

The DMO will be required to submit an annual report to the Welsh Ministers and NRW for each scheme year. The annual report must set out how and to what extent the DMO has acted in accordance with its operational plan. The Welsh Government will review the annual reports to inform any decisions regarding refinements to the scheme, including any unintended impacts on children and young people.

We will consider updating this CRIA when further legislation is made in 2026 to implement the reuse element of the scheme.