

#PAININTHEGLASS CAMPAIGN REPORT



KEEP BRITAIN TIDY'S CASE FOR GETTING GLASS OFF OUR STREETS AND INTO A DEPOSIT RETURN SCHEME

Our campaign

In April 2022, we asked the public to share their experiences with glass in the environment and to contact their MPs to let them know that they wanted to get broken glass out of the environment and into the Government's Deposit Return Scheme – which in England and Northern Ireland will include only plastic and aluminium containers, not glass. In Scotland and Wales, however, glass will be included. Since then, nearly 1,000 people have written to their MPs to ask them to act.

We've heard stories from across the UK of people whose family have been injured from littered glass, and the volunteers who struggle with removing broken glass from the environment.

To us, this isn't surprising. We deal first-hand with the dangers that glass poses to people, pets and wildlife when littered in the environment, and have years of experience campaigning to protect people from these harms.

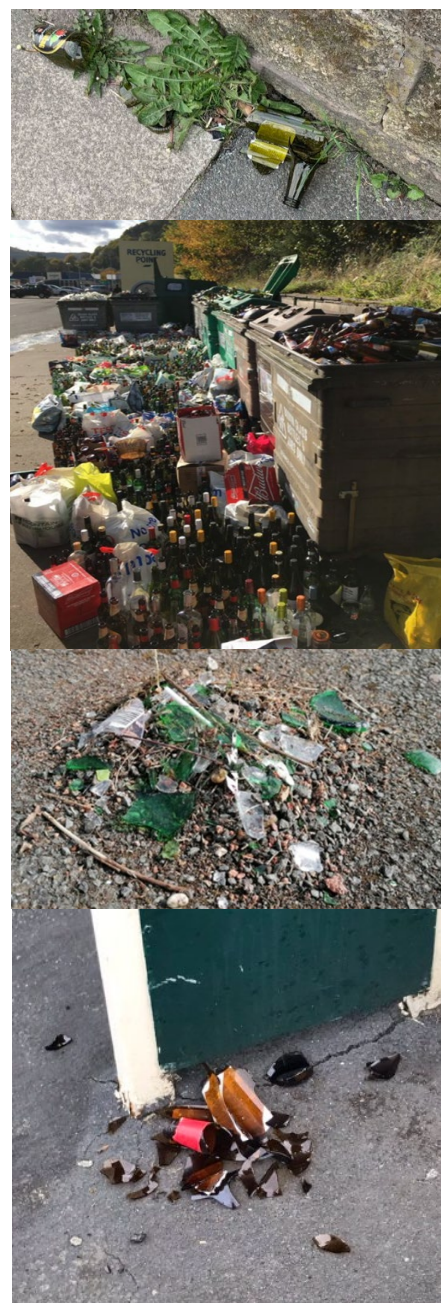
It's also reflected in polling data. A new YouGov survey from May 2022 found that, when members of the public from Great Britain were asked which materials should be included in a DRS, glass bottles were the most requested (78%), above plastic bottles (74%) and aluminium cans (70%).

Do you think the following containers should be included within a Deposit Return Scheme?

Glass bottles - 78% YES
Plastic bottles - 74% YES
Aluminium cans - 70% YES

The issue is clear

- Broken glass in the natural environment poses a far greater risk to the general public and to wildlife than to retailers trained to handle the material.
- If consumers are able to take glass away from supermarkets, then they are able to return it
- The inconsistency across the nations will also create confusion for consumers, costs for producers, potential loopholes and cross-border issues.
- There is a significant carbon saving from using recycled versus virgin glass. Expressed in terms of percentages, melting 100% cullet (recycled glass) reduces the CO2 emissions by about 58% compared to a situation where no cullet is used.¹



A selection of photos sent in to our Twitter account by our supporters

Stories from the public

We've been collecting stories from people who have come into contact with broken glass. A plastic bottle isn't likely to cause injury, and can be picked up and put in the bin. When it comes to broken glass, it's a different story entirely. Below are just a handful of the stories that have been shared by the public.

- On Halloween, a child was playing in the grass at River Lawn park in Tonbridge. He was rushed to A+E having been cut on broken glass.
- Volunteer litter pickers told of how they are unable to clear broken glass, which cuts through plastic waste bags.
- In Norwich in April 2022, a dog owner was forced to pay £4,000 in vets bills after some glass which had been left in the bush severed eight tendons in the paw of her dog Yuki.
- And on May 24th, the Stoke Sentinel reported that a popular dog-walking route had become a "no go area" due to broken glass, according to a statement from Staffordshire Police.

"Couldn't pick this up while out litter-picking as it could cause really nasty injuries to whoever collected the bags in"

"Dog missed this broken bottle by inches on this evening's walk"

"Disappointed by the Government's plan to exclude glass from the upcoming Deposit Return Scheme [...] Smashed up bottle on a public footpath putting wildlife, dogs and people at risk!"

Some of the comments from the public responding to our campaign

It's not too late

While the Government has signalled that it will exclude glass from a DRS in England and Northern Ireland, it's not too late for the government to back the public's calls to get glass off the streets, pavements and parks where it causes real harm to people and wildlife, and into the DRS where it can be recycled and reused. Countries across the world have managed to use DRS to reduce glass litter and improve glass recycling, and it's clear that the public don't want the UK to miss out on this opportunity.

This is why we are recommending that the Government reconsider its position and to include glass within the DRS nationwide.

