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Planning

Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) Litter Survey

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

UK2: Preliminary market engagement notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

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Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-060c5f

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Scope

Description

The UK Government is introducing a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) for drinks containers, launching in October 2027. Under the scheme, consumers will pay a small, refundable deposit on single use PET and metal drinks containers, which is returned when the container is brought back to a return point. The aim is to reduce litter, increase recycling rates, and generate high quality recycled materials. The latest published policy statement from May 2025 can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/deposit-return-scheme-for-drinks-containers-policy-statement/deposit-return-scheme-for-drinks-containers-policy-statement?utm_source=copilot.com

Defra is commissioning a national litter composition study for 2027 to update the 2020 study. This new evidence is needed to set a pre-launch baseline to evaluate the impact of the DRS and to support wider Circular Economy policy areas including plastics, vapes, litter, and packaging reforms. The study will provide a robust, statistically valid picture of what is being littered across England and Northern Ireland and in what quantities, forming the foundation for future policy assessment.

The commissioned service will replicate the 2020 methodology while expanding the scope to include new item classifications - particularly detailed categorisation of DRS in scope and out-of-scope drinks containers by size and material, and additional categories for vapes, plastics, and other priority items. Suppliers will design and deliver a national fieldwork programme, collect and sort litter samples, and produce a full dataset and analytical report. Key outputs include national estimates of litter composition and specific breakdowns of DRS eligible container litter by count and volume, establishing a clear pre DRS baseline.

Total value (estimated)

- £200,000 excluding VAT
- £240,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 6 July 2026 to 5 July 2027
- 1 year

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 73210000 - Research consultancy services
- 71241000 - Feasibility study, advisory service, analysis
- 90711500 - Environmental monitoring other than for construction

- 90711400 - Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) services other than for construction

Contract locations

- UK - United Kingdom

Engagement

Engagement deadline

6 February 2026

Engagement process description

You are invited to participate in a supplier engagement event regarding our DRS Litter Survey requirement . We are keen to engage with the market, to understand supplier capabilities, and explore innovations that can drive efficiency, resilience, and sustainability. This is a key opportunity for suppliers to input into the requirement and the procurement process.

The event will take place virtually via MS Teams on the 6th February 11:00am - 12noon.

The contract is expected to run for one (1) year starting Summer 2026 to Summer 2027

Suppliers are asked to register their interest by completing <https://forms.office.com/e/YRG2WL89ee>

This form should be completed and returned no later than 1pm on the 05/02/2026. If you have any questions prior to the event please email joyce.angoma@defra.gov.uk

The engagement session will include the opportunity for questions to be raised and also for the Authority to get feedback from you about the requirement.

Participation

Particular suitability

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)

Submission

Publication date of tender notice (estimated)

23 March 2026

Contracting authority

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PNBD-3289-CDGX

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Website: <https://defra-family.force.com/s/Welcome>

Region: UKI32 - Westminster

Organisation type: Public authority - central government