

#TooCoolForPlastic

Iceland's Plastic Packaging Footprint

2020

Iceland
Doing it Right



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A word from Richard Walker

Three years on from Iceland's bold pledge to remove plastic packaging from all of our own-label products, no one could have foreseen the extraordinary challenges that 2020 would bring.

2020 has been enormously demanding for everyone. The pandemic brought about changes in shopping patterns, with panic buying and a huge shift to online ordering. These changes and the challenges of working in Covid-19 secure environments put significant pressures on both our colleagues in stores, and our suppliers throughout the UK and across the world.

Against this headwind we've continued to work on removing plastic, reducing its use throughout the business, and in many cases, turning the tap off once and for all.

Covid-19 has set us all back, creating resurgent demand for plastic – from carrier bags for online deliveries to the plastic film wrapping fresh fruit and vegetables. Whilst also slowing down progress with our suppliers as we work to develop and test new alternative materials.

While we have still made great progress within specific products, the fact that our sales grew by 16.4% to meet our customers' needs during Covid-19 means, we have inevitably seen a rise in plastic usage.

2020 has been described as a year like no other but we can already see that 2021 will be a year of hard-won progress on the journey to build back better as Covid-19 still impacts us here in the UK and across the world.

But that is only part of the story. We delivered a leading innovation programme of reduced plastic and plastic-free pilots in our stores: developing, testing and proving the technical alternatives to plastic. We are continuing to make positive progress, reducing our use of plastic per item by 1.7% and achieving a 19.8% overall reduction in plastic packaging compared with our base year of 2017.

Our target is to be plastic free and our commitment to get there is unwavering. We need to turn the tap off. The drive to be plastic free is the right thing for our business, the communities we serve, and the planet.



Richard Walker,
Managing Director



Our #TooCoolForPlastic Manifesto...

- 1 Remove plastic packaging from Iceland own label products by the end of 2023** – because it is essential to turn down the tap on global plastic production.
- 2 Collaborate with and support our suppliers,** and work with competitors and the packaging industry to find solutions.
- 3 Focus on materials that our customers can recycle easily at home** and provide clear on-pack recycling information.
- 4 Minimise or remove packaging without creating more food waste** or compromising food safety.
- 5 Go back to basics and use traditional materials** like paper, board, glass, metal and wood.
- 6 Work quickly to remove PVC (polyvinyl chloride), polystyrene and black plastic,** which are all very difficult to recycle.
- 7 Use only widely recyclable plastic** such as HDPE, PE, PP and PET*, by end of 2023.
- 8 Use composite materials that are mainly made of paper and board** but include small amounts of plastic – while we look for ways to replace it.
- 9 Lobby the Government to put in place national food waste collections** for industrial composting alongside the consistent collection of a core group of packaging materials for recovery and recycling.
- 10 Report on our progress** and what we have learned at the end of each year.

*High Density Polyethylene, Polyethylene, Polypropylene, Polyethylene Terephthalate

One Plastic Footprint

In September 2020, Iceland became the first UK supermarket to publish its total plastic packaging footprint, and we have committed to doing so annually from now on.

For several years, businesses have used incomplete and inconsistent information to represent the scale of their plastic packaging, their commitments to change, and the progress being made. This lack of transparency has made it impossible for anyone to judge whether business actions are delivering real progress, or simply generating headlines.

We joined forces with four of the UK's most influential campaigners on plastic pollution – Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, A Plastic Planet and Surfers Against Sewage – to call on other retailers and the wider business sector to commit to enhanced transparency in their reporting of plastic packaging.

Together, we also urged the Government to amend the Environment Bill to incorporate mandatory reporting on plastic packaging, and targets to reduce UK plastic pollution.

We believe that we can only solve the plastic crisis by businesses and policymakers working together to develop a more accurate and transparent picture on the issue, and through regulated, government-enforced reduction targets.



We have now updated our plastic footprint data, improving its accuracy and transparency for 2020 and including the weight of plastic in the carrier bags we sell. We've also included our complete packaging footprint as we look to shine a light on the challenge we face to reduce the amount of packaging we use.

We continue to call on all major businesses to do the same and on the Government to introduce mandatory reporting, along with mandatory plastic reduction targets for businesses.

Our full plastic and packaging footprint is set out on page 14.



“For years UK supermarkets have been hiding behind half truths and incomplete data, never fully disclosing the enormous scale of the plastic within their own businesses. This bold move by Iceland must quickly be adopted by all UK retailers. Should retailers not volunteer to do the right thing now, Whitehall must move quickly to make transparent plastic reporting a legal requirement.”

Sian Sutherland,
A Plastic Planet
Co-Founder

A
PLASTIC
PLANET

“Surfers Against Sewage believes that setting plastic pollution reduction targets in the Environment Bill will help drive the action required at individual, business and community level to stem the plastic tide. We urgently need measures that correspond with these targets, including transparent reporting from all businesses. We have a once in a generation opportunity to deliver world-beating legislation to end plastic pollution once and for all.”

Hugo Tagholm,
Surfers Against Sewage CEO



“You can't manage what you don't measure. Many corporate ambitions for reducing plastic waste may sound impressive, but unless they are clear about how much they're responsible for in the first place these can be fairly meaningless.”

Tony Bosworth,
Friends of the Earth
campaigner

“There's nothing like transparency about a problem to force companies to tackle it, and that's true of throwaway plastic too. If UK supermarkets are underreporting their packaging, ocean plastic pollution could be far worse than we thought and wildlife could be even more at risk. Iceland has made a bold and brave move by publishing their plastic data, and we urge other retailers to follow suit.”

Nina Schrank,
Greenpeace UK
Plastic Campaigner


Pilots and Learnings

With the support of our suppliers we successfully delivered 34 in-store pilots across our fresh and frozen categories.

↓ 72% 🛒 62.43




↓ 89% 🛒 22




↓ 100% 🛒 22



↓ 89% 🛒 23



↓ 89% 🛒 22




↓ 89% 🛒 91.75



↓ 100% 🛒 95.7



↓ 96% 🛒 127




↓ 80% 🛒 30.86 (all slices)




↓ 22% 🛒 0.9




↓ 100% 🛒 0.235




↓ 89% 🛒 3



↓ 100% 🛒 4.5




↓ 89% 🛒 5




↓ 100% 🛒 12.6



↓ 89% 🛒 12.7



↓ 89% 🛒 1.4



↓ 100% 🛒 1.32



↓ 55% 🛒 8



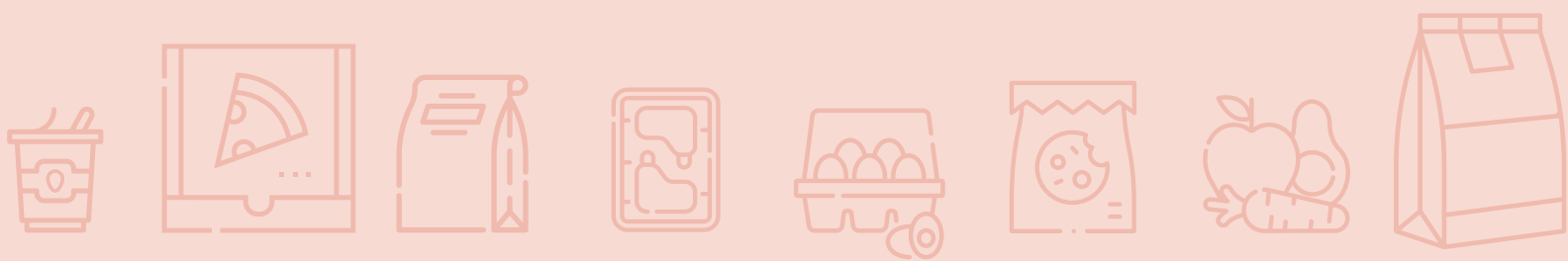
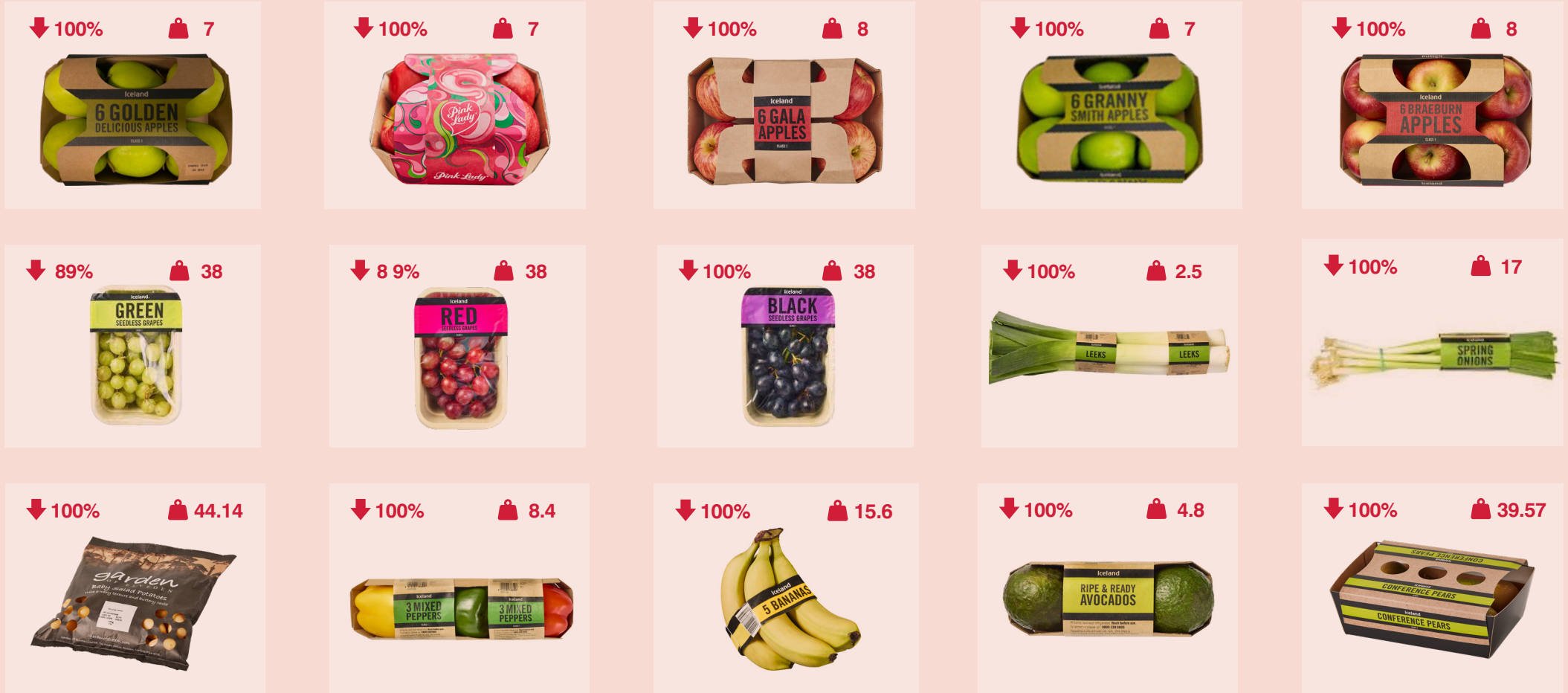
Symbol Key

↓ Product% Plastic reduction

🛒 Potential plastic reduction (tonnes)

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#TooCoolForPlastic at Christmas

Following the success of our award-winning Reduced Plastic Christmas initiative in 2019, this year we extended the Christmas range to give our customers an even greater choice of seasonal products with plastic-free or significantly reduced plastic packaging.

We increased the number of entirely plastic-free festive products to 26, which included our No Meat No Bull Wellington, Luxury Stuffing Parcels, Mini Steak Bakes and the UK's first plastic-free Christmas Cake from a supermarket.

Another 16 products were redeveloped to reduce the plastic content in their packaging, down to an average of just 3% plastic by packaging weight. These included Christmas classics such as our Luxury British Easy Carve Extra Tasty Turkey Crown, Boneless Perfect Turkey Crown wrapped in Bacon, and Bacon Wrapped Goose with Cranberry and Apple Stuffing, as well as indulgent desserts such as our Extremely Chocolaty Gateau and Luxury Raspberry and Lemon Stack.

Christmas 2021

We have continued redeveloping the packaging for our products to significantly reduce or remove plastic packaging on some of our Christmas favourites, including the first plastic-free Luxury mince pies, Christmas Cake & Christmas Cake from a multiple retailers in the UK. The range this year has over double the amount of products compared to the 2020 menu.



Reducing plastic in our stores

Shelf-ready packaging

While primary packaging remains the key focus of our pledge, we have also removed **304 tonnes of plastic** from our stores by removing shelf-ready packaging for our chilled and dairy lines or switching to plastic-free alternatives.

In 2021, we will continue development work with our suppliers to reduce plastic even further.

In-store marketing

By working closely with our partners at HH Global, we **removed more than 22 tonnes of plastic** from our in-store marketing by either switching to sustainable paper alternatives or reducing the thickness of plastic used for our signage.



Helping customers recycle more

Carrier bag recycling

In July 2021 we launched plastic recycling bins in our Food Warehouse stores to help customers recycle plastic film they are not able to recycle at home. Following an initial 13 store trial this will roll out right across all these 150+ larger stores within the Iceland family.

The new bins, which will be located at the front of each store, will allow customers to recycle flexible plastic film items including carrier bags, bread bags, produce bags and magazine wraps.

Currently, flexible plastics are not commonly collected or recycled and typically end up in general household waste with only 17% of councils currently collecting this material for recycling.

**the food
WAREHOUSE**




On pack information

We are proud members of OPRL supporting its aim to deliver a simple, consistent and UK-wide recycling message on packaging to help consumers reuse and recycle more material correctly, more often. OPRL labels are recognised by more than 3 in 4 consumers. <https://www.oprl.org.uk/>

We use the most up to date OPRL labels and apply them to all of our packaging



Hard to recycle plastics

-  We do not use black plastic
-  We do not use pvc
-  We now only have 8 products with polystyrene



Reducing plastic pollution

Reducing Ocean Plastic Pollution

We were proud to become members of the Global Ghost Gear Initiative and help tackle the problem of ghost fishing gear. Joining the GGGI was another step forward in our efforts to reduce marine pollution.

GGGI was founded by non-profit World Animal Protection in 2015 in a bid to help remove some of the millions of abandoned fishing nets, pots and lines that get left in the sea each year. Since 2019, the GGGI has been hosted under Ocean Conservancy's Trash Free Seas® program. For further information visit <https://www.ghostgear.org/>

We introduced the GGGI to our Fish and Seafood suppliers within our Plastic Free Working Group in April, giving them the opportunity to learn more about the initiative and potentially become members.



Supporting Community Activism

In 2020, the Iceland Foods Charitable Foundation (IFCF) continued its partnership with environmental charity Surfers Against Sewage to support its Big Spring Beach Clean, which was postponed to the Autumn and saw **35,000 volunteers** across the UK collect **40,000kg** of plastic.



Plastic Free Awards and Million Mile Beach Clean



The Iceland Foods Charitable Foundation (IFCF) will once again partner with marine conservation charity, Surfers Against Sewage (SAS), to host the annual Plastic Free Awards in October 2021. The event will recognise and celebrate the individuals, businesses, innovators and pioneers who are leading the way in the fight against plastic pollution.

In 2021, the IFCF will also begin its three-year partnership to support the SAS Million Mile Beach Clean campaign, encouraging volunteers all over the country to get outdoors and clean up their local beaches, streets, rivers and mountains.

Looking forward to 2021/2022

We have made much progress through our leading development and pilot programme, proving that alternatives to plastic can and do work. We are also committed to ensuring any changes we make do not have a negative impact on food waste and the basic expectations of our customers with respect to quality, freshness and product life. There are still significant technical challenges within certain product categories that remain without a practical answer if we are to be able to meet the challenge of being plastic free as opposed to something more akin to a 'plastic net zero'*.

Introducing new materials and thereby segmenting the supply chain just for Iceland's customers is a unique commercial challenge. We are working in partnership with our suppliers, packaging material and machinery manufacturers with a clear shared understanding that our customers have a limited amount of money to feed their families, and whilst we have invested heavily as a business in our work to be plastic free, the solutions we apply most have got to be commercially viable – **we can't and won't ask our customers to pay more.**

This year will mark the halfway point in our challenge to become plastic free by the end of 2023. We face real challenges as we start to come out of the Covid-19 pandemic: the impacts of which alongside other major labour and resource scarcity challenges for the global supply chain, are still a real barrier to developments beyond the just maintaining the status quo.

Our target is to be plastic free. We remain committed to this destination.

*Plastic Net Zero – A Rapid and deep reduction in plastic usage, but where zero plastic (plastic free) cannot be achieved, neutralising the impact of any residual plastic usage that cannot currently be eliminated by recovering and recycling where possible an additional equivalent amount of nature bound waste plastic (marine/ land)



Plastic footprint



Primary Plastic (Food and Non-Food Packaging)

Iceland UK



BRANDED	OWN LABEL	CARRIER BAG
21,672.71 tonnes	10,421.22 tonnes	4,102 tonnes
1,105,611,895 items ²	850,971,543 items ²	181,000,000 items ²

Iceland Non-UK



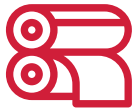
BRANDED	OWN LABEL
338.61 tonnes	174.95 tonnes
21,275,421	17,016,826 items ²



Secondary Plastic (Shrink-wrap, Shelf Ready Packaging)

1399.01 tonnes	479.86 tonnes	-
76,442,128 items ²	40,515,802 items ²	-

27.54 tonnes	11.43 tonnes
1,590,220 items ²	854,857 items ²



Tertiary Plastic (Pallet Wrap)

550.92 tonnes	211.34 tonnes	-
1,804,349 items ²	706,795 items ²	-

7.95 tonnes	4.70 tonnes
26,143 items ²	16,376 items ²



Individual plastic water bottles (Still, Sparkling, Flavoured)

129,660,362 items ²	0 items ²	-
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1,336,090 items ²	Detail not available
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Sachets

Detail not available	4,040,132	-
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0 items ²	76,622
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How we measure our plastic packaging footprint

This report measures Iceland's plastic packaging footprint in its UK stores and depots for the full calendar year 2020 (1st January 2020 to 31st December 2020). In addition, it includes plastic packaging usage in all The Food Warehouse stores in the UK, and products sold by Iceland outside of the UK.

More details on our methodology can be found on page 16.

Our Additional Packaging Footprint in 2020

As well as reporting transparently on plastic, we have committed to sharing details of Iceland's complete packaging footprint and of plastic carrier bag use.



Iceland UK

	BRANDED	OWN LABEL	TOTAL
Paper	17,134 tonnes	13,232 tonnes	30,367 tonnes
Glass	17,311 tonnes	55 tonnes	17,366 tonnes
Aluminium	4,053 tonnes	425 tonnes	4,478 tonnes
Steel	6,111 tonnes	136 tonnes	6,247 tonnes



Carrier bags usage in 2020

	Number of bags	Tonnes
Single-use plastic bags	28,839,000	383
Re-useable plastic bags (online)	68,736,000	1,663
Re-useable plastic bags	57,227,250	1,385
Re-useable plastic bags (home delivery)	26,000,000	629
Re-useable paper bags	2,870,385	241
Insulated re-useable plastic bags	324,000	42
Total	181 million	4,102 tonnes

Our progress



Remove 100% plastic from all own label packaging by the end of 2023



19.8% reduction at the end of 2020/21



Reduce packaging overall by 10% by the end of 2023



1.7% increase at the end of 2020/21



In 2020 we collected and recycled **2,431 tonnes** of secondary and tertiary plastic packaging.

Methodology

The data in this report is for the calendar year 2020 (1st January 2020 to 31st December 2020) and covers all Iceland and The Food Warehouse stores and depots in the UK. In addition, the report measures the plastic packaging of products sold by Iceland outside the UK.



Iceland UK

refers to all Iceland and The Food Warehouse stores and depots in the UK.



Iceland Non-UK

refers to all products sold outside the UK by Iceland, including through our company-owned stores in the Republic of Ireland and Czech Republic, and by our Iceland International business supplying franchised Iceland stores and other export customers.



Primary Plastic

comprises all plastic packaging that product is directly packaged in, including trays, bags, film, bottles (including water bottles) and sachets that product is directly packaged in. These include PET, RPET, CPET, OPP, PP, HDPE, LDPE, PS, and multi-polymer laminates for Iceland own label. This includes all food and non-food packaging. This data has been independently collated and verified by ERP UK Ltd. Primary Plastic does not include plastic carrier bags, which have been measured and reported separately.



Secondary Plastic

includes shrink wrap and shelf-ready packaging. These include RPET and LDPE for Iceland own label. This data has been independently collated and verified by ERP UK Ltd.



Tertiary Plastic

includes pallet wrap used in depots for deliveries. This data has been independently collated and verified by ERP UK Ltd. as part of our PRN requirements.



Carrier Bags

includes all plastic carrier bags sold by Iceland and The Food Warehouse. These include single-use carrier bags, reusable 'bags for life' and small single-use bags for meat products. This data has been collated without third party verification.



Water Bottles

includes all individual plastic water bottles, including those sold in multipacks. This data covers all still, sparkling and flavoured water products only. It does not include bottles used for milk, fruit juice or soft drinks. Iceland does not sell any own label water bottles.



Sachets

includes all sauce or other ingredient sachets sold individually or as part of a product. Iceland does not have access to data on branded products that include sachets.

Follow our [#TooCoolForPlastic](#) journey on sustainability.iceland.co.uk

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www.sustainability.iceland.co.uk