



Impact report 2020

Certified



Corporation



A welcome from our CEO

I'm delighted to introduce you to our fourth impact report. It highlights what we did in 2020 to honour our company's 'change for good' purpose and to continue making a tangible difference to UK recycling.

2020 was unusual for all of us. In an exceptional year, we all had to be resilient, adapt to changing social restrictions, and look after each other. So this report also provides an opportunity for us to look back and reflect on what we did to support our members, employees and community during the COVID-19 crisis.

Having joined Ecosurety at the beginning of 2021, I wasn't personally involved in the projects outlined in this report, but I've

been impressed by the passion, drive and ambition of the Ecosurety team, and the wide range of initiatives the company has been involved with.

From awareness campaigns, via innovative projects, to boosting industry collaboration and support to expand UK recycling infrastructure, we've made an impact on Ecosurety's key areas of focus.



2020



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Ecosurety
Exploration
Fund
 Winner



Our 2020 highlights include:

- Selecting the winning **Ecosurety Exploration Fund projects**. This has provided financial support for four amazing projects tackling flexible plastics, urban recycling rates, electrical re-use and ground breaking recycling technology for batteries.
- **Becoming a certified B Corp** and reinforcing our 'change for good' purpose. This was a key milestone in our journey to demonstrate our commitment to driving greater sustainability.
- Launching battery **collection points in 600+ Cancer Research UK charity shops that will also help raise money for the charity**.
- Setting up Podback, a voluntary **recycling scheme for coffee pods**.

2021 is an important year for the waste and resources industry. There are several consultations on far-reaching regulatory reform as we prepare for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) coming into effect from 2023.

We're excited to work with our members, reproprocessors and the whole industry to help shape the most efficient and fair EPR system for the future.

I'd like to take this opportunity to say thank you to our members for their continued support. I look forward to the opportunities 2021 will bring to engage more with you. Please do get in touch with me and the team, and here's to another year filled with positive impact and even more change for good.

Will Ghali

Our purpose. Change for good.

Becoming part of something bigger,
to make the world better.



We're in the business of compliance, but we are invested in so much more. We also have a purpose, and that is to create change for good.

This means always aiming to improve everything we do, not only for us but for the world around us. Protecting life on earth guides how we work. And that's why we decided to become a B Corp.

As a B Corp, we're part of a global community that balances purpose and profit and uses business as a force for good.

It's not just a badge of honour, it means more responsibility. We're fully committed to having a holistic approach in all aspects of sustainability and to always strive to be better and lead by example.

Getting B Corp certified

The B Impact Assessment to become certified is tough! It's a rigorous evaluation of a company's impact on its workers, customers, community and environment. It took a lot of work, and we're proud we got there.



Read the full Ecosurety B Impact Report

Forward thinking

We'll remain a B Corp by continuing to lead and improve, and we've included a board objective to improve our score year on year. Our dedicated team is developing a sustainability roadmap and implementing an action plan to make sure we achieve it.

We've pledged to become net zero before 2030, and we will only offset as a last resort.

We're monitoring our Scope 1 and 2 emissions and are busy preparing an action plan to reduce them. And we'll engage our suppliers and customers to reduce our Scope 3 carbon emissions too.

We know we're not perfect. This is just the beginning of our journey and we plan to share our progress transparently and honestly.

Maximum B corp score of 200



Median score for ordinary businesses

0

We said...

We will act now

Testing, showcasing and supporting new ideas, concepts and projects that can be scaled up.



We will work with policy makers

Acting to ensure the producer responsibility regulations, including the PRN system, are fit for purpose.



We will initiate and support new recycling schemes

Supporting new voluntary schemes that can have a meaningful impact on how we deal with our resources, before EPR reform makes this mandatory.



We did

- We created 600 new battery collection points with [Cancer Research UK](#), including giving a £100 donation for every tonne collected - boosting battery collections and cancer research all at the same time.
- We funded the [Maximising recycling from purpose built flats](#) project led by ReLondon, trialing new interventions and facilities to tackle an age-old problem.
- We worked with HMRC and Defra to [help shape future EPR reform](#).
- We advised Defra on the impact of COVID-19 to ensure the system was fair for both producers and recyclers.
- We provided key support to set up and administer the [Podback](#) scheme, a cross-industry voluntary recycling scheme for coffee pods.
- We helped initiate a [pet food pouch recycling trial with retailer Pets at Home](#) that collected over 200kg of pouches in three months.



We said...

We will continue to raise awareness and inspire others to act

Initiating and supporting awareness and behaviour change campaigns to ensure that citizens are empowered to act sustainably.



We will support and amplify innovation projects

Investing £1m over three years to support UK based innovation and research projects reducing the impact of packaging, WEEE and batteries on the environment.



We did

- We funded the [Fit for Reuse](#) project led by the Reuse Network to create up to date EEE reuse guidance that will be shared across industry.
- We financially supported and amplified the [Recycle Week campaign](#).
- The [#InTheLoop](#) impact reports were shared to inspire other cities/local authorities to improve on-the-go recycling infrastructure.

- [We funded four ground-breaking projects](#), including CellMine to accelerate research into a low-impact and low-cost process to recycle lithium-ion batteries, and BOSS 2D that will improve and facilitate widespread recycling of mixed flexible plastics.



Education

Everyone has an important part to play in recycling. Except sometimes they just don't know it. We were involved in different projects around the UK in 2020 that showed how everyone can do their bit, and why it's so important. Because the **more we all know, the more we can all do.**

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Every Can Counts

Inspiring a 'can do' attitude for metal recycling

The issue

Metal recycling can be continued indefinitely and saves natural resources, energy and carbon emissions. It takes 95% less energy to make an aluminium can from recycled metal.¹

But recent data shows that 18% of drink cans in the UK were not recycled in 2020.²

The action

We proudly continued with our fourth year as official funding partner of Alupro's campaign, **Every Can Counts**.

Every Can Counts promotes drink can recycling at restaurants, festivals, universities, shopping centres, parks, offices and other public spaces.

And Every Can Counts is aiming for a 100% recycling rate for drink cans in the UK.

1. [Recycle Now - how are cans recycled?](#)
2. [Every can counts - UK drink can recycling rate hits record high](#)



The impact

COVID-19 threw a spanner in Every Can Counts' usual work at festivals and events in 2020. But **significant progress** was still made.

As well as releasing an augmented reality game to celebrate Recycle Week, Every Can Counts also created a rainbow art installation which appeared overnight on Brighton Beach in August. The colourful arch made from 2,500 cans sent a message of positivity. It paid tribute to pandemic key workers, and reminded people that they can do infinite good by recycling empty drinks cans.

Coverage of the installation reached around **38 million people** and **990 recycling surveys** were completed.



Find out more about our partnership with Every Can Counts.



The future

According to Every Can Counts' 2020 research:³

90% of people in the UK say that since COVID-19, it's **more important than ever** to take care of our planet and the environment.

Only 41% of respondents said they often or always recycle when out and about.

We've made good progress. But there's still more that needs to be done.

So we'll carry on funding Every Can Counts in 2021. And we look forward to volunteering at festivals again with Every Can Counts as soon as we can all get back in the fields under the summer sun.

3. [Every Can Counts 2020 winter newsletter](#)

Fit for reuse

Less thrown away. Less poverty. More electrical reuse.

The issue

Over 16.7 million tonnes of household electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) have been sold in the UK between 2008 and 2020.⁴

But the most recent guidance on how to prepare EEE for reuse was published back in... 2007. And since then, many complex standards and new regulations have been introduced.

The action

After rigorous shortlisting and independent judging, the Fit for Reuse project, led by The Reuse Network, was selected as one of four winners of the **£1m Ecosurety Exploration Fund**.

Fit for Reuse will provide that much-needed updated guidance for reusing EEE.

And by fully funding it, we committed to help make it happen.

reuse
NETWORK

Up-to-date, industry approved guidance for reusing EEE simply doesn't exist.
New information is desperately needed.

4. [Environment Agency report on household and non-household Electrical and Electronic Equipment placed on the market](#)

Ecosurety
Exploration
Fund
Winner

The impact

Fit for Reuse kicked off at the end of 2020. The Reuse Network has now employed a dedicated expert and is setting up a cross-industry advisory panel to deliver the new guidance in the next 12 months.

It will make sure the latest EEE reuse information is available to stakeholders including Reuse Network members, manufacturers, producers, suppliers, policy makers, regulators and local authorities.

Each organisation involved will be able to play a part in improving reuse of EEE.

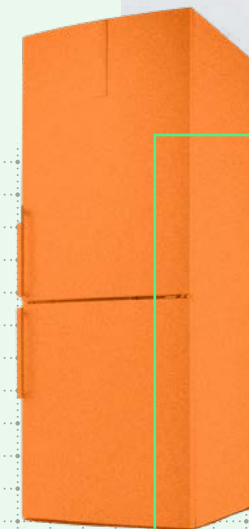
This means **less going to landfill** or being recycled, and **more going to low-income families.**



Find out more
about Fit for Reuse.



Watch a short Fit
for Reuse video.



The future

In contrast to the 'current' 2007 guidelines, the new guidance will be a live document so it can be continually updated. **It will play a key role in supporting the government's new focus on reuse for future Extended Producer Responsibility for WEEE.** And the Fit for Reuse project is also developing training to make sure adoption is widespread and effective.

The impact of the new guidance will also reach far beyond the 100+ reuse organisations in the UK to benefit all stakeholders, including consumers.

#InTheLoop

Getting on-the-go recycling going

The issue

The UK uses more than 23 billion plastic bottles and cans,⁵ and nearly three billion coffee cups⁶ every year. 11 billion of these don't get recycled.⁷

This is partly because:

- 33% of people don't know what can be recycled.⁷
- more than 50% of local authorities don't provide adequate on-the-go recycling facilities.⁸
- and when they do exist, items are often too contaminated to be recycled.



The action

We collaborated with [Hubbub](#) on #InTheLoop, a campaign to inform and inspire on-the-go recycling action. After the success of the pioneering #LeedsByExample campaign, we piloted #InTheLoop across Swansea and Edinburgh, which ended in 2020.

In Swansea, we installed 119 new eye-catching recycling bins and the first ever Welsh coffee cup recycling bins.

In Edinburgh, we installed 58 of the first on-the-go recycling points in the city, including 16 dedicated coffee cup bins.

And, this was accompanied by signage, on-street art installations, advertising and social media activity to promote the campaign in each city.

#InTheLoop is backed by major high street retailers and brands and is the UK's biggest collaborative approach to boost recycling on-the-go.

ASDA

BUNZL

CARRE
NERO

Coca-Cola
Great Britain

COSTA

DANONE
DANONE
DANONE

ecoSURETY

HIGHLAND
SPRING

innocent

LUCOZADE RIBENA
SUNTORY

M&S
EST. 1884

McDonald's

Nestlé

PRET A MANGER

STARBUCKS

5. [Consultation on introducing a Deposit Return Scheme](#)
6. [LeedsByExample impact report 2019](#)
7. [Swansea #InTheLoop impact report](#)
8. [Recoup: Disposal 'On the Go' - Local Authority Survey](#)

The impact

Swansea #InTheLoop

- **89% increase in target materials** in recycling bins.
- **147,000 items** recycled.
- Key learnings publicly shared in an [impact report](#).
- Communications resulted in
 - **12 million opportunities** to see/hear.
 - **900,000 social media impressions**.
 - **4,000 people engaged** at events.
 - **100+ businesses** backing the campaign.



Find out what we learned, and read the Impact Report for Swansea #InTheLoop.

Edinburgh #InTheLoop

- **76% increase of target materials** in recycling bins throughout the campaign.
- **468,000 items** recycled.
- Amount of recyclable materials in general waste bins **down to 8%**.
- Key learnings publicly shared in an [impact report](#).
- Communications resulted in
 - **5.2m opportunities** to see/hear.
 - **650k people reached** through targeted ads.
 - **173 businesses** backing the campaign.



Read the full Impact Report for Edinburgh #InTheLoop: it's packed full of insights.



Discover more about what happened in [Edinburgh](#) and [Swansea](#) with #InTheLoop.



The future

#InTheLoop is planning to launch **two more trials in 2021 in the UK**. Each new location will give a unique opportunity to refine the campaign and get valuable insights.

And Swansea council has agreed to continue its campaign and is hoping to expand it over the coming years.

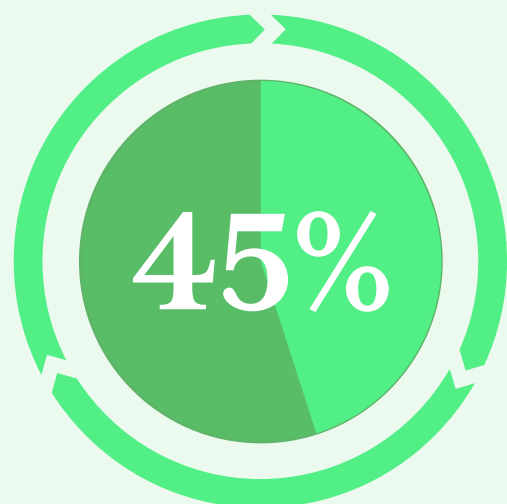


Recycle week

One week. One national campaign to raise recycling awareness

The issue

Despite targets aiming higher, UK recycling rates have stagnated at around 45%.⁹



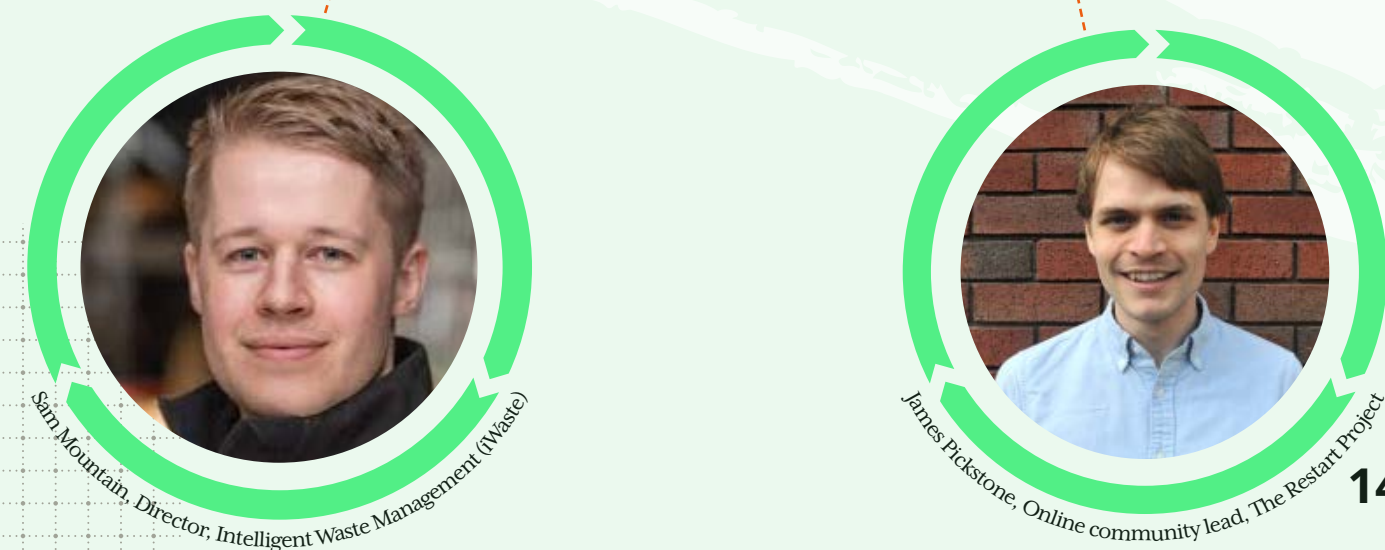
The action

As an official funding partner of Recycle Week, we supported the UK's principal public awareness campaign to boost recycling in 2020. It's organised by WRAP under the Recycle Now brand.

Recycle Week 2020 ran under the theme of 'Together - We Recycle' and thanked the nation for its recycling efforts despite the challenges of COVID-19.

We helped by:

- Providing financial backing.
- Promoting it online with social media.
- Changing our logo to include the Recycle Now arrow.
- Publishing five Q&A industry insight blogs with a range of leading voices from the world of recycling and reuse including:
 - [Bristol Waste Company](#)
 - [iWaste](#)
 - [Indigo Environmental](#)
 - [The Restart Project](#)
 - [City to Sea](#)



9. [Letsrecycle - England's 2019/20 recycling rate inches up](#)

The impact

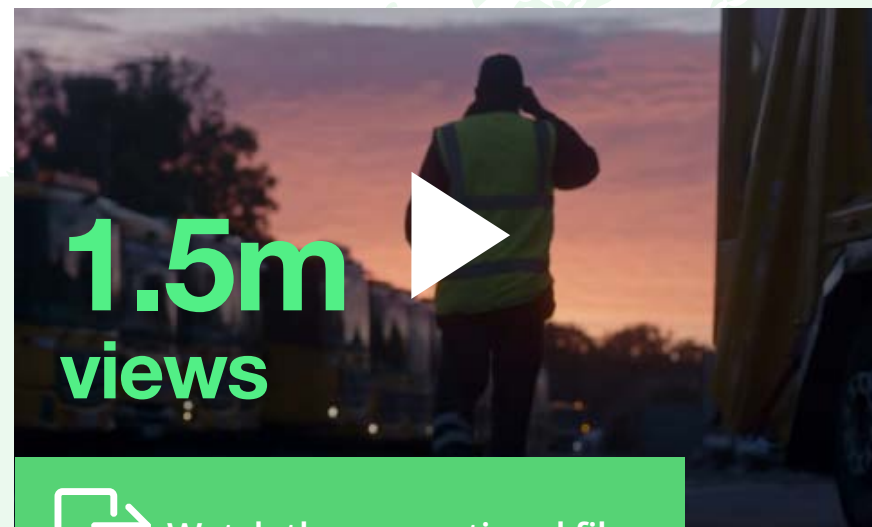
Recycle Week 2020 ran from 21 – 27 September.
As a whole, the campaign achieved:

- 26m digital impressions.
- 16m social media impressions.
- #5 trending Twitter topic on launch day.
- 185m opportunities to see or hear through 364 outlets.
- 1.5m views of the **promotional film**.¹⁰

Our own industry insight Q&As were viewed over 300 times on our website.



Find out more about how we helped engage and inform with Recycle Week 2020.



**1.5m
views**



Watch the promotional film



**16m social media
impressions**



**#5 trending
Twitter topic
on launch day**

The future plans

We'll be promoting Recycle Week again in 2021. And, if the COVID situation allows, we hope to run a local recycling campaign too.



10. [WRAP Recycle Week 2020 results](#)

Innovation

Recycling technology often needs to catch up with demand. They say necessity is the mother of invention. But when it comes to transforming recycling in the UK, so too is support and funding from Ecosurety.

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BOSS 2D

When recycling film is a whole separate issue

The issue

Recycling waste flexible plastic is a big industry challenge.

Different types of plastic film need to be separated before being recycled, but existing technology can't easily do this. To current state-of-the-art machines, laminate, multi-layer and mono-layer materials all look the same.

And that means most flexible plastics are either sent for incineration or exported to overseas markets.

Just 6% of film plastic is currently recycled in the UK,¹¹ compared to 55% of plastic bottles.¹²

Developing a way to sort, separate and recycle flexible plastics has never been more urgent.

The action

In 2020, after rigorous shortlisting and independent judging, BOSS 2D was selected as one of the winning projects of the **£1m Ecosurety Exploration Fund**.

BOSS 2D, led by Impact Recycling, aims to establish the first commercial scale automated process to sort and recycle flexible plastic film.

Ecosurety
Exploration
Fund
Winner

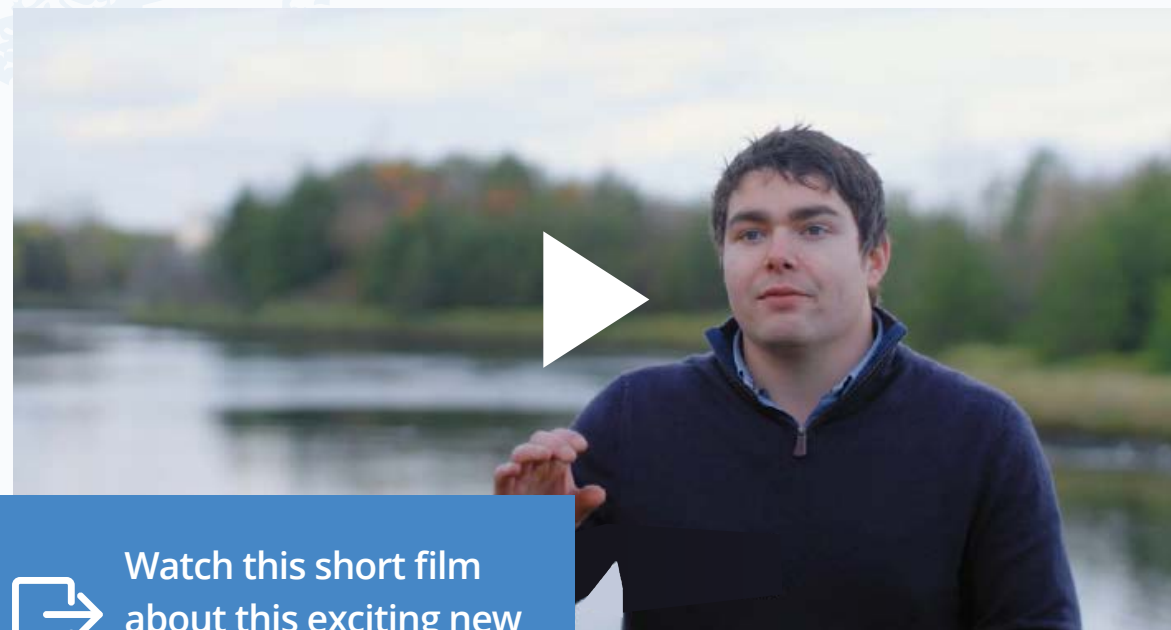
11. [The UK Plastics Pact annual report 2019-20](#)
12. [Recycle Now - what to do with plastic bottles](#)

The impact

Using nothing but water and specially designed processing equipment, BOSS 2D can efficiently separate post-consumer flexible plastic film. The initial design can be used to produce up to two tonnes an hour of high purity PE and PP from mixed plastic films and laminates.

BOSS 2D is well on its way to creating a scalable, circular economy for post-consumer plastic film.

The first technical goal of the project — to remove laminated and multilayer film from 'prime' polyolefin film — has already been achieved.



Watch this short film about this exciting new technology



The future

We'll continue supporting BOSS 2D through to project completion later in 2021.

It's being designed to add easily onto existing recycling lines so that it can be licensed to third party recyclers. This will allow wide-spread collection of flexible plastic waste from consumers as the plastic film can be efficiently separated for recycling.

One relatively simple solution. A huge plastic film recycling revolution.



Find out more about our involvement with BOSS 2D

CellMine

Powering the recovery of rare earth metals from lithium-ion batteries

The issue

With more electric vehicles and gadgets in use every day, the market for lithium-ion batteries is set to grow to \$1 trillion by 2026.¹³

These batteries use rare earth metals including lithium, cobalt and manganese. But the truth is, there isn't enough of these metals to meet growing demand and raw metal extraction is environmentally damaging too.

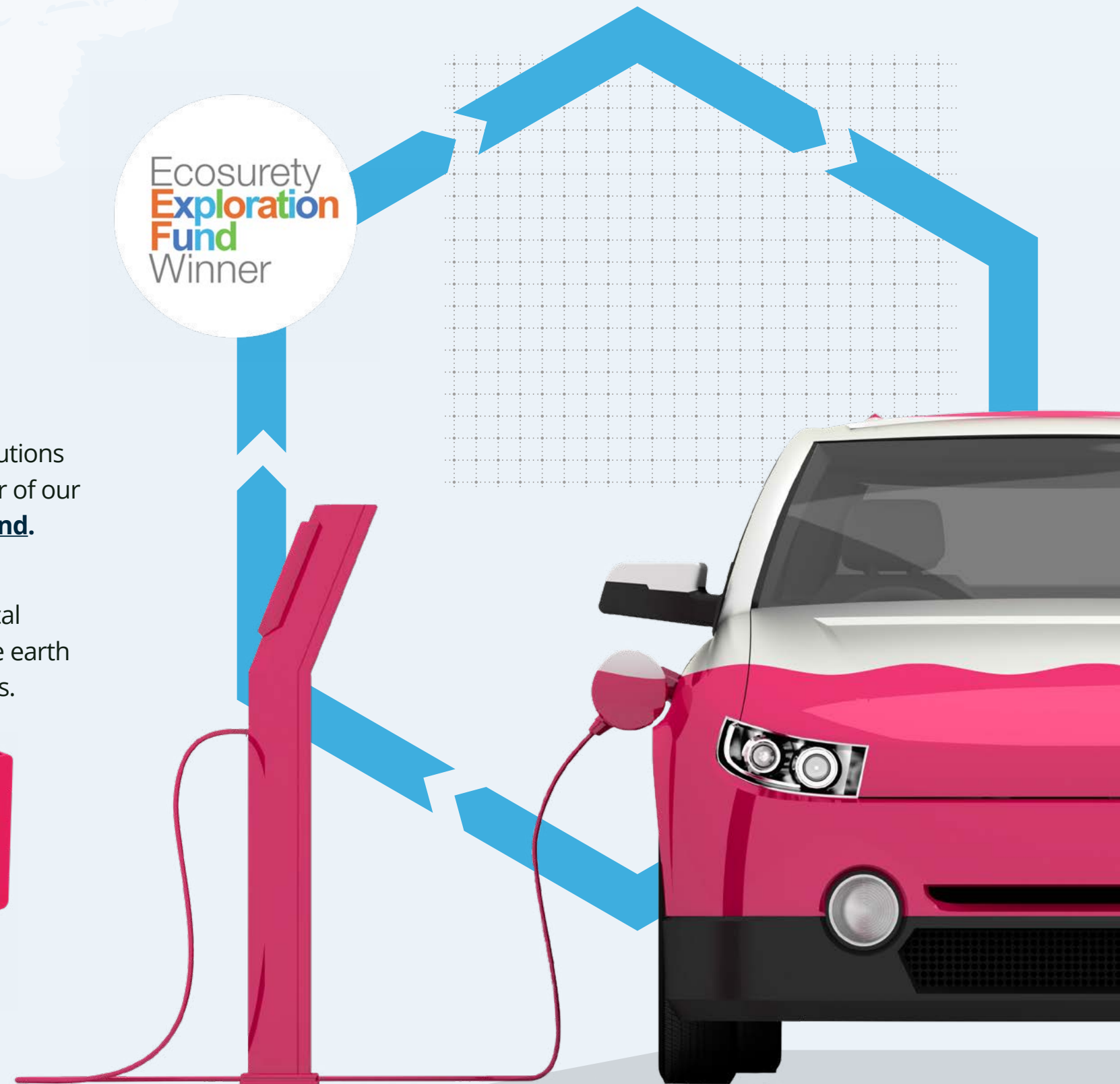
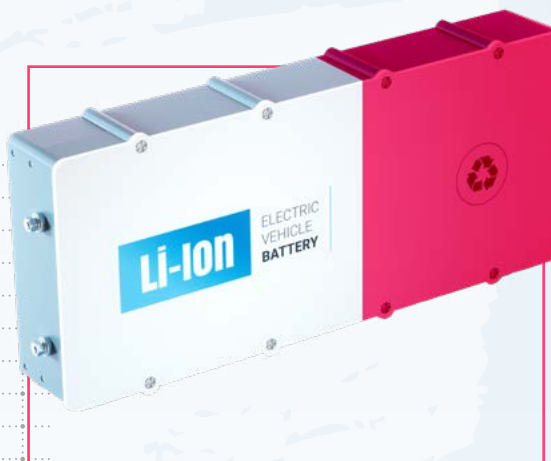
Current ways to recover rare earth metals from waste are environmentally unfriendly and hazardous.

Plus, they don't recover them in a form particularly suitable for manufacturing new batteries. The idea is there, but the technology needs to be drastically improved.

The action

In 2020, CellMine, an Impact Solutions project, was selected as a winner of our **£1m Ecosurety Exploration Fund**.

CellMine aims to find novel, environmentally-friendly chemical routes to selectively recover rare earth metals from lithium-ion batteries.



13. [Business Wire -Lithium Ion Battery Markets Expected to Reach \\$1 Trillion By End of the Forecast Period, 2020-2026](#)

The impact

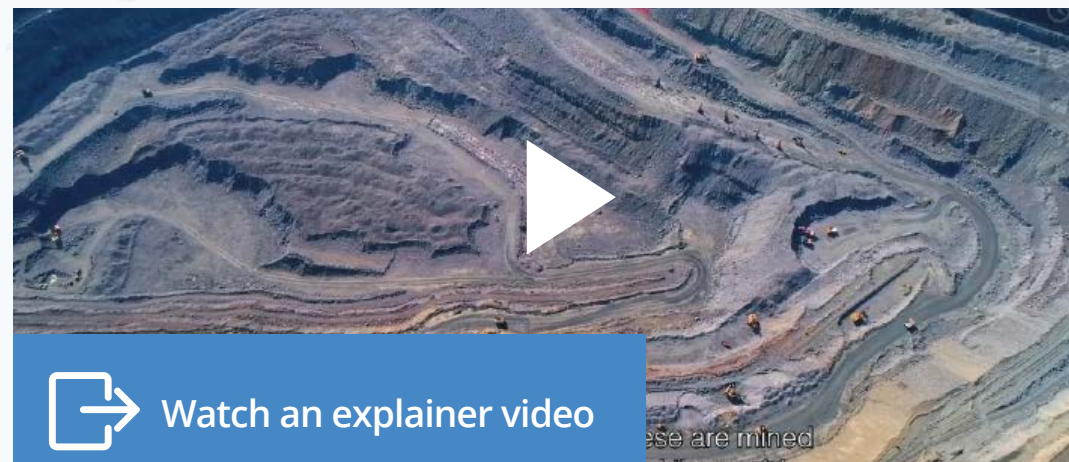
CellMine began its research at the end of 2020. It's looking at low energy, low cost and sustainable chemical methods to recover metals at higher yields than current technologies, and with sufficient purity to be used again in batteries.

Initial proof of concept tests were successful and the project is moving on to explore different ways to improve the technique.

Our funding plays a key part in realising the idea. It will allow Impact Solutions to take its new technology into the real world, where it can make a real difference.



Find out more about the energy of the CellMine project



Watch an explainer video



The future

Once CellMine research is completed in 2021, it will leave the lab bench to be scaled up ready for commercial use. This disruptive technology will promote the future of lithium-ion battery recycling and manufacturing in the UK.

It's set to reduce the CO₂ footprint of lithium cell production, create market demand for waste cells and reduce end-of-life costs for manufacturers.



PolyMet

The pot of gold at the end of the coloured plastic recycling rainbow

The issue

Every year in the UK
1m tonnes
of coloured rigid plastic
goes to landfill or
incineration.¹⁴

Why?

Either because it can't be detected by recycling sorting machines, or it produces such a low grade of recyclate that processing it isn't commercially viable.

The action

We're a key consultant for PolyMet, a process being developed by Impact Solutions to fix this problem.

PolyMet aims to transform coloured plastic into clear, recycled plastic so that it can have pigment re-added to create any colour.

Impact Solutions has secured a £0.8m Innovate UK grant to develop PolyMet. And we offer market insights to make sure the technology is developed in line with industry requirements.

This increases the value of this traditionally low-worth waste stream and keeps it out of landfill.



14. [DS Smith report on black plastic ready meal trays](#)

The impact

In 2020, PolyMet successfully completed a pilot demonstration rig that can be upscaled easily and run continuously.

Using low levels of a non-hazardous, naturally derived solvent, it successfully removed colour from various plastic polymers.

The method is **fast, inexpensive** and designed to be simply added as a step in existing recycling processes.

We presented PolyMet to a number of leading UK packaging producers, recyclers and industry stakeholders in 2020. Interest has been piqued. The industry is engaged.

 Find out more about PolyMet

The future

PolyMet is due to complete in 2021. It's hoped it will be applied to a wide range of plastic types and achieve food grade standards without delay.



Infrastructure

We installed systems and facilities for some pioneering recycling schemes in 2020. The nuts and bolts are now in place to keep operations running throughout 2021 and beyond.

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Cancer Research UK battery collections

Taking charge of domestic battery recycling

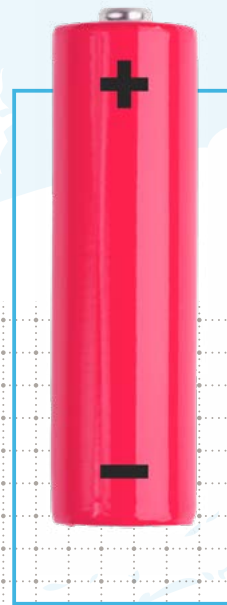
The issue

Household batteries account for more than 95% of portable batteries on the market. But they make up less than a third of those collected for recycling.

And that means every year,

**thousands
of tonnes**

of portable household batteries end up either hoarded in homes or sent to landfill.¹⁵



The action

Limited access to drop-off places can create a barrier to people recycling their batteries.

So we helped set up a collection point in each of Cancer Research UK's 600 charity shops.

And, we pledged to make a financial donation of £100 to the charity in exchange for every tonne of batteries collected.

Which means more batteries recycled, and more funding for Cancer Research UK.

15. [2020 battery collections exceed indicative target](#)



The impact

With the introduction of COVID-19 lockdowns and the closure of non-essential stores, Cancer Research UK charity shops remained largely closed throughout 2020.

But with the branded collection infrastructure already in place across the UK, the scheme can get going just as soon as the charity shops can safely reopen.



The future

When the shops are finally open again, we'll run a targeted social media campaign to promote the collection points and the fact that the project will help raise money for Cancer Research UK.



Find your nearest Cancer Research UK store and battery collection point.

Maximising recycling from purpose-built flats

Changing the story of multi-storey recycling

The issue

20% of UK households live in flats. This figure reaches 80% in some London boroughs.¹⁶

And because residents in flats tend to receive lower levels of service than street-level properties, they recycle less.

In London, this is one of the main barriers to achieving the Mayor's London Environment Strategy target of 65% municipal recycling by 2030.



Food waste, textiles and Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) are the most problematic contaminants in dry mixed recycling (DMR) from London flats. **They make up a significant proportion of the waste produced overall: 28.1%, 4.6% and 1.2% respectively.**¹⁷

16. [English Housing Survey - Households report 2017-18](#)

17. [ReLondon - Making recycling work for people in flats report](#)

The action

After thorough shortlisting and independent judging in 2020, Maximising recycling in purpose-built flats (led by ReLondon, previously LWARB) was selected as one of four winning projects of the **£1m Ecosurety Exploration Fund**.

And with Ecosurety funding in place, the initiative could get going.



The impact

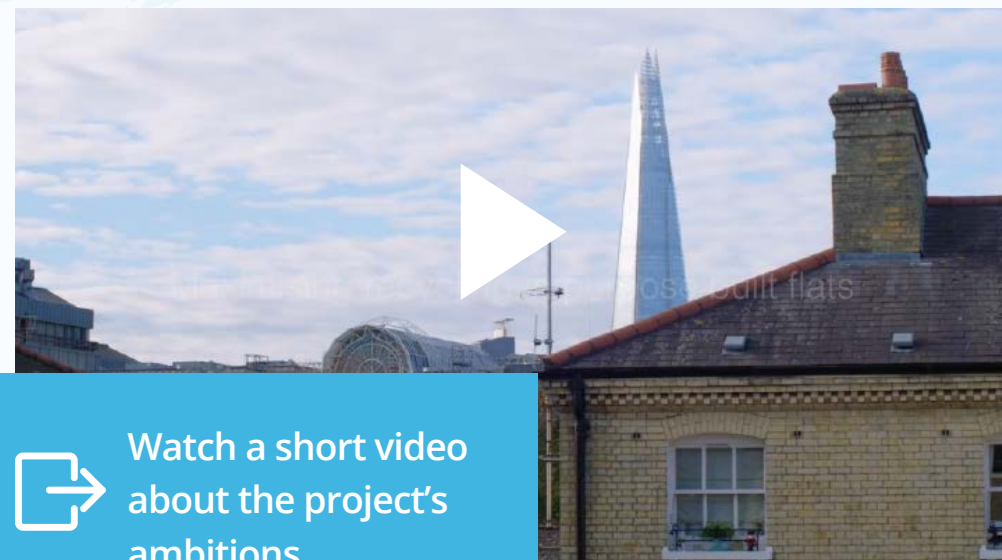
The project, which began at the end of 2020, was limited by the third pandemic lockdown.

Once tight restrictions are lifted, the project will trial new interventions across four estates in South London.

The main aim is to maximise the capture and quality of dry recycling, which is largely made up of packaging.

Facilities to capture food waste, textiles and WEEE will be introduced to help reduce dry recycling contamination.

And, the project will also introduce messaging and behavioural interventions to encourage residents to use the new facilities and recycle more.



Watch a short video about the project's ambitions.



The future

On the ground activities, interventions and communications will pick up pace throughout 2021.

This project is committed to share and amplify the results to all local authorities and housing providers. That way, as many parties as possible can benefit across the whole of the UK.



Find out more about the project.

Pets at Home food pouch recycling

Reducing the impact of well-fed pooches

The issue

Laminated flexible packaging, including pet food pouches, accounts for nearly

140,000 tonnes of packaging waste per year in the UK.

And that increases 10% annually.¹⁸

Because they are difficult to recycle, the collection of used pet food pouches is not widely available to consumers.

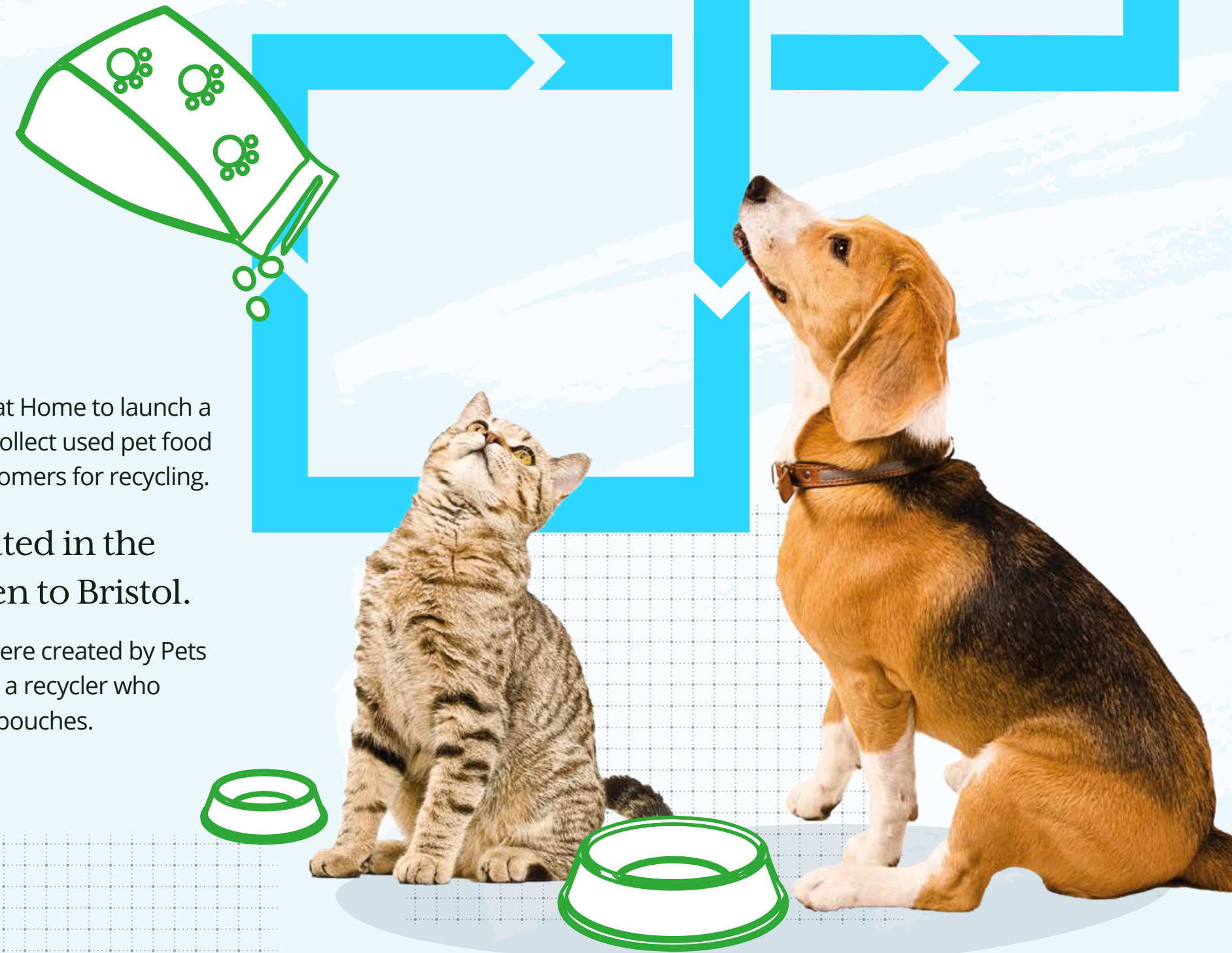
An aim of the UK Plastics Pact Flexible Plastic Packaging Roadmap is for all households to ultimately have access to flexible plastic packaging facilities in the coming years.¹⁹

The action

We collaborated with Pets at Home to launch a trial in November 2020 to collect used pet food pouches in-store from customers for recycling.

20 stores participated in the trial from Aberdeen to Bristol.

Dedicated collection bins were created by Pets at Home whilst we sourced a recycler who could recycle the collected pouches.



18. [WRAP report into Recycling of laminated packaging, page 11](#)

19. [WRAP guide - Creating a circular economy for flexible plastic packaging](#)

The impact

Within three months over **200kg** of used pouches had been collected in the trial, despite deliberately low levels of communication due to COVID-19 travel restrictions.

Thanks to clear messaging and dedicated collection bins, the levels of contamination were very low.

The pouches were recycled to produce two primary materials, aluminium and oil.



The future

The trial continues and is set to be scaled up to 100 Pets at Home stores by the end of 2021, with an increased level of communication as COVID restrictions are hopefully eased.

Eventually it will be available to 450+ stores with coverage across the entire United Kingdom.

 Find out more

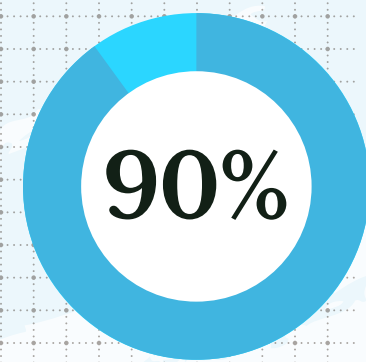


Podback

Bean there. Done that. Now recycling coffee pods.

The issue

More than 14 billion coffee pods are sold worldwide every year. But research carried out in the UK in 2020 found that 35% of coffee pod drinkers don't know that pods can be recycled.²⁰



90% also said they'd like to be able to recycle their coffee pods through their usual household recycling system.²¹

Until now, there hasn't been the infrastructure in place to make this possible. And that's where we came in.

The action

We helped create Podback, a voluntary coffee pod recycling scheme. It's a pioneering cross-industry collaboration that covers the majority of the UK market.

At the end of 2020, we announced Podback with Nespresso, Nescafe Dolce Gusto and Tassimo all on board.



20. [Ecosurety partners with industry giants to create voluntary recycling scheme for coffee pods](#)

21. The polling was conducted by YouGov on behalf of Podback, between 9-11 September 2020. Total sample size was 4,323 adults.

The impact

Podback means coffee pods can now be **collected alongside regular household waste** and recycling at kerbside²² for the first time.

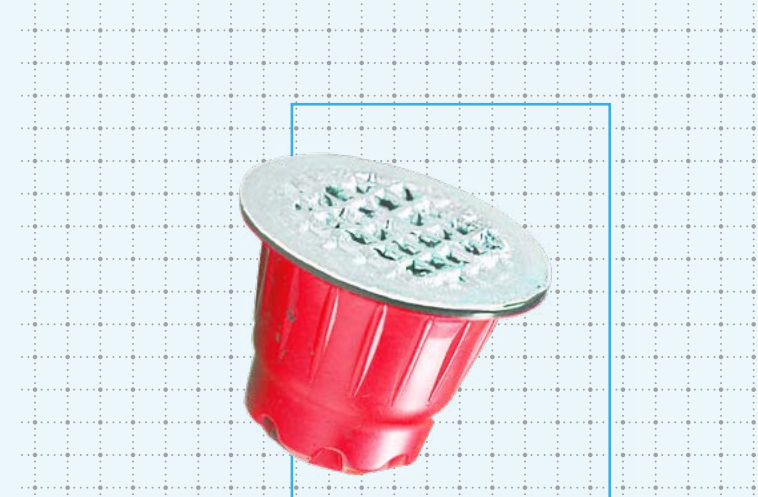
And, consumers can now drop their pods at any of the

6,500 Collect+ drop off points

in local stores across the UK, or arrange for them to be collected at home when groceries are delivered.



 Watch what we did.



The plastic and aluminium pods will be processed separately to produce plastic pellets and aluminium ingots which can then be reused.

And the coffee grounds will go through anaerobic digestion to produce soil improver and biogas.

The future

We'll carry on working with all stakeholders in 2021 to help Podback reach its full potential.

 Find out more about Podback

22. Visit podback.org to check participating post codes.



Collaboration

Great minds don't always think alike. But when they think together, they can achieve more. That's why we unite key people and projects in the recycling industry to communicate, collaborate...and get more done.

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Ecosurety Exploration Fund

Investing in a better future for all

The issue

The need for innovation, research and education to tackle the environmental impact of packaging, batteries and WEEE has never been greater.

But lack of funding often means even the best ideas can't get off the ground.

The action

We launched the first round of the £1m Ecosurety Exploration Fund in November 2019. The selection process was delayed due to COVID-19, but four winning projects were announced by our independent panel of judges in December 2020 and awarded a combined total of **£500,000**.

Just some of the judges



Libby Peake, Senior Policy Advisor, Green Alliance



Janet Gunter, Co-founder of the Restart Project



Chris Hillman, Head of Innovation and Sustainability UK & IE, Danone



Mike Barry, former Director of Sustainable Business (Plan A) at M&S



Paul Franey, Senior Manager, Repair and End of Life at Virgin Media



Tim Cooper, Professor of Sustainable Design and Consumption at Nottingham Trent University

The
Ecosurety
Exploration
Fund

The impact

Out of more than **50** projects submitted in the first round, the **four** winners were:

Ecosurety
Exploration
Fund
Winner



BOSS 2D

New, disruptive technology that will establish the first commercial scale automated process to separate mixed post-consumer plastic film packaging for recycling.



CellMine

An Impact Solutions project that will pioneer research into low energy, low impact and low-cost recycling processes to reclaim rare earth metals from lithium-ion batteries.



Fit for Reuse

A project that will create up-to-date guidance on electrical goods repair and reuse, in line with evolving WEEE/EEE standards.



Maximising recycling from purpose-built flats

Introducing facilities and inspiration across four estates in London to increase the quantity and quality of dry mixed recycling.

The future

While COVID initially delayed roll out in 2020, the projects are all now well under way and most are due to complete in 2021.

And, we're excited to launch the second round of the Ecosurety Exploration Fund in 2021 with a new call for entries.



Find out more about the Ecosurety Exploration Fund.

Policy

Finding and following the best route of action

The issue

In 2020, the government carried on developing its Resources and Waste Strategy with plans to reform producer responsibility.

This, combined with the unfolding COVID crisis, raised new questions and concerns. Would the producer responsibility system hold up? Would recycling businesses survive? And would government intervention be needed to prevent mass non-compliance?

The action

Right from the beginning of the pandemic, we were proactive in helping to find the answers.

Producer Responsibility COVID-19 Working Group

A monthly group set up at the start of the pandemic with various government agencies and departments. We gave feedback on how the producer responsibility system was performing, and suggested ways to help maintain a fair balance between producers and recyclers.

Plastic packaging tax

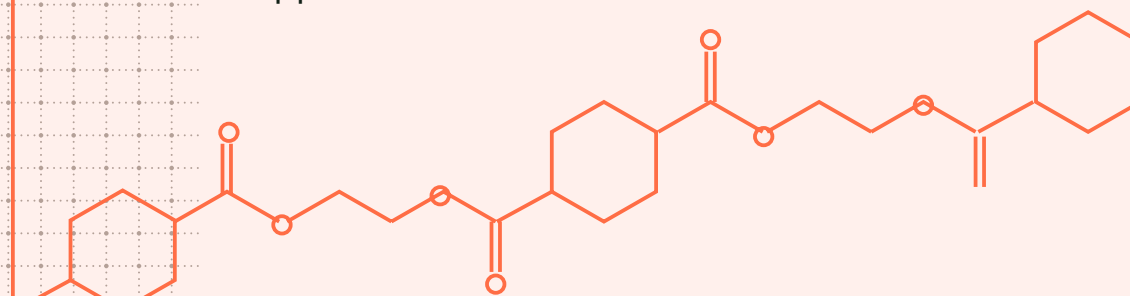
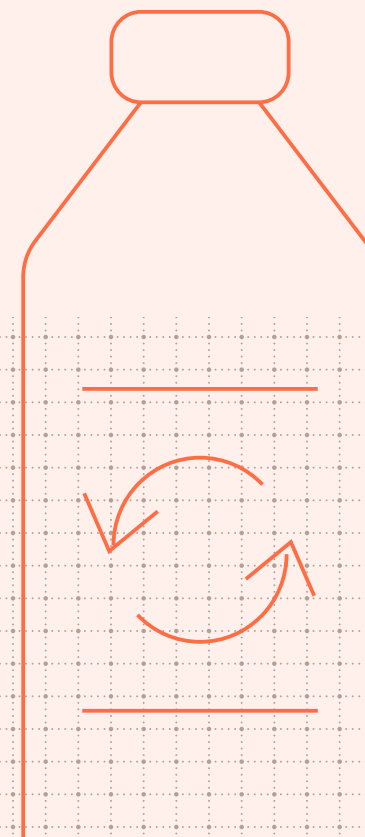
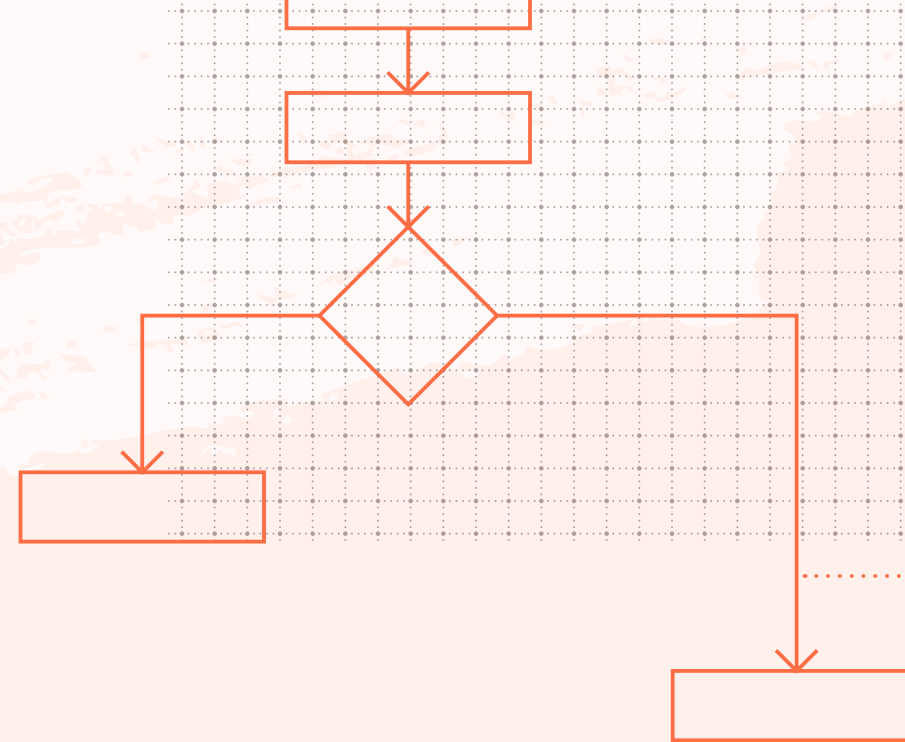
When HMRC released and consulted on the proposed legislation for the plastic packaging tax, we linked up with the lead civil servant and advised on definitions and liabilities. And, we actively raised awareness with our members.

Modulated fees

We contributed to the industry development of modulated fees, which will replace the Packaging Recovery Notes (PRN) system for packaging producers from 2023. Our key input to a dedicated working group helped make sure the new system will be designed to be simple and coherent.

DEFRA packaging working group

A packaging working group which considered policy changes including Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) and consistent collections. As members, we gave feedback, stress tested government thinking and helped develop emerging policy ideas - particularly around raising the benchmark for producer responsibility compliance schemes by upgrading the scheme approval criteria.



The impact

- The producer responsibility system ultimately held up well against the COVID-19 crisis with little intervention required.
- Our input on the plastic packaging tax fed through to the confirmed legislation and **we are now on the HMRC Plastic Packaging Tax Implementation Group.**
- Much of our input to government on legislation reform, including a model to balance competition with a centralised function, made its way into the consultations released in 2021.
- Our policy team's briefing webinars for our members on topics like COVID-19 impact and the plastic packaging tax were viewed **over 500 times.**



Find out more about our policy work here.

The future

Critical consultations to reform producer responsibility for WEEE and packaging go live in 2021, and final decisions will be made about the future landscape of Extended Producer Responsibility.

We'll carry on working with government and industry groups to make sure a fair, balanced and effective system is put into place. And we'll inform and support our members every step of the way.



Strategic Impact Meetings

Connecting producers with recyclers

The issue

The lines of communication between producers and those involved in recycling could be more efficient.

Producers who place material on the market often don't connect with the recyclers who treat it at end-of-life.

And interaction between other stakeholders like charities, NGOs and policy makers who are all largely working to the same end, can be ineffective or non-existent.

Without an opportunity to come together, **share knowledge and tackle common problems**, opportunities can be missed.



The action

As in previous years, we held five Strategic Impact Meetings in 2020 to open up new opportunities for industry leaders to collaborate.

We ran both packaging and WEEE-focused meetings, which were led by new policy and impact project developments.

Most of the meetings were held online. All of them provided a unique opportunity for stakeholders to feedback on our new services development, latest impact projects and data work, and policy responses to government.

The impact

We welcomed **over 100 people** from leading organisations in the food, drink, retail, technology, charity, recycling and policy sectors to the meetings, which focused on:

- collaboration opportunities to **boost the circular economy**.
- PRN market analysis.
- Ecosurety policy insight.
- Extended Producer Responsibility developments.
- new services development.
- raising consumer awareness.
- Distributor Takeback Scheme (DTS).
- COVID-19 impact on industry.
- driving insights from data.
- Government consultation support.



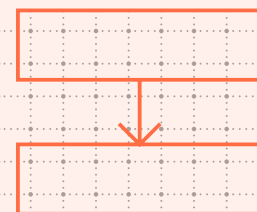
Find out more about our strategic impact meetings.



The future

Our Strategic Impact Meetings will continue into the future as a valued cross-industry hub for cooperation and knowledge sharing.

And with the upcoming Extended Producer Responsibility changes in 2023, the level of collaboration that our meetings provide is more essential than ever.

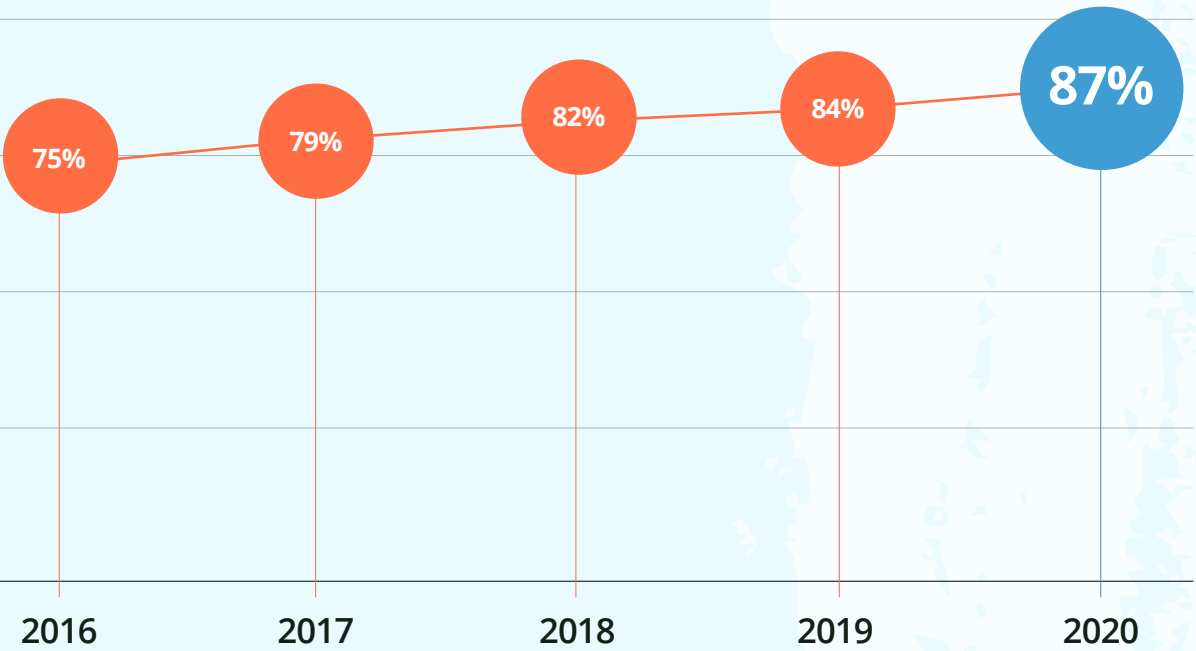


Our team

Building on success into the future.

The positive impacts we make are only possible by bringing the right people together. It all starts with our passionate and dedicated team.

EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION SCORED



Employee satisfaction

In a year of exceptional circumstances and uncertainty our resilience and operations were stress-tested like never before. We are proud that through all of this we improved our employee satisfaction score for the fifth year in a row.



Satisfaction with team working and communication notably increased, thanks to our IT systems which meant our team could continue to perform at their best, despite lockdowns, office closures and travel restrictions.

Job satisfaction also reached its highest score of 91% in 2020.

The pandemic forced us to work in new ways, support each other more and reassess our work/life balance, bringing with it many benefits.

Diversity and inclusion

We believe in the power of diversity and difference in our team. Ensuring equal opportunities for prospective and existing employees is central to that, however we recognise there is always room for improvement.

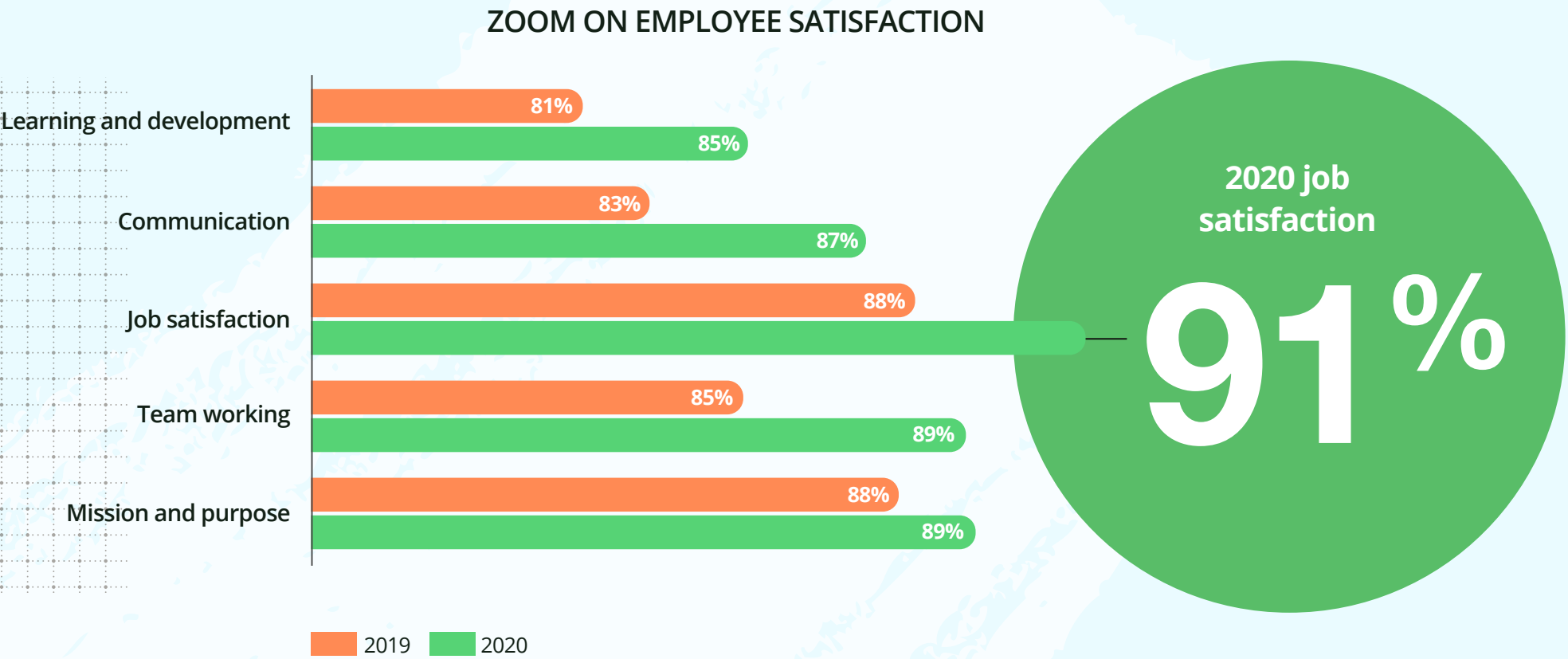
In 2020 an equality, diversity and inclusion team space was created to promote discussion and the sharing of resources. Managers also attended equality and diversity training to develop awareness of unconscious bias and to encourage the provision of mentoring support.

What next?

We are taking on board the improvements that helped our team to excel throughout the pandemic so we can build on the high levels of engagement as we ease into a post COVID world.

To ensure that our company is as open, accessible, and inclusive as possible, an action plan for equality, diversity and inclusion has been developed for 2021.

Equality and diversity training will also be provided to the whole team and we will work with an external expert to identify best practices and areas of development. This will include a review into how we communicate our job offers to increase the diversity of applicants.



COVID response

Looking out for others when we couldn't physically see them

Just like everywhere else in the UK, the pandemic that took hold in 2020 hit our 1,000+ members, employees and communities hard.

Producers were dealing with new levels of uncertainty, employees suddenly found themselves working from home, and our local communities were stressed like never before.

We stepped up to help alleviate the challenges of a year in and out of lockdowns and packed with worry. In addition to what we were already doing to create change for good, we had to react, adapt, and find new ways too. And here's what we did.

To support our employees we:

- did not furlough any staff or claim government support.
- provided financial support for home working equipment and energy use.
- gave free confidential counselling and coaching support.
- organised regular online events and activities promoting wellbeing and social interaction.
- delivered care packages to employee homes.
- provided unlimited fully paid sick leave for suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases.



To support our members we:

- increased our invoicing frequency to help manage budgets.
- offered payment plans and deferred payments for those struggling financially.
- waived all data submission late fees.
- presented live webinars on the compliance implications of COVID-19.
- added to our team, including a policy advisor and dedicated member monitoring support.
- gave remote training on how to do pack weighing because we couldn't visit sites as usual.
- increased support resources on the Members' Area website.
- provided 100% continuity of service.

Satisfied customers

When we carried out our annual members survey in June 2020, it reflected our proactive pandemic response:

- **97%** said that their business requirements were understood clearly and met effectively.

100% surveyed said their account manager is an expert in their field and knows all essential information about the regulations.

- and satisfaction ratings increased compared with the previous year for invoicing (94%), information (99%), customer service (97%) and overall satisfaction (99%).

Changes for good

It's hard to find positives from the year COVID-19 took hold, but our pandemic response did include some changes that we want to keep. We're not planning to return to the 'old way' of doing things, and we're looking forward to keeping the benefits of flexible working. Onwards and upwards we go, together.

To support our community we:

- donated a total of **£7,000 to 22 charities** selected by our employees.
- donated over £600 to Fareshare through our annual member survey.



What's next

Improving UK recycling and making a positive impact on the environment is a continual journey, one that we are steadfastly committed to. As we pursue our purpose of change for good in 2021, we will work hard to:



Increase the volume of materials recycled in the UK

Facilitate the recycling of problematic materials through voluntary recycling schemes

Educate the public and businesses to recycle more and waste less

Influence policy towards a more circular economy

Help our members to **reduce the environmental impact** of their products

Help to build **infrastructure for Repair and Re-use**

Reduce our greenhouse gas emissions in line with our 2030 net zero commitment **and engage with our suppliers and members to do the same**

