



little freddie

# Our first steps towards a greener future

— Progress Report 2019





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# Hello

**Here at Little Freddie, we believe our children deserve better. From the quality of their food to the future of their planet, everything we do, we do to give them the best in life.**

We not only make baby and toddler food that genuinely tastes homemade, but go above and beyond to ensure our recipes are nutritious and sourced responsibly.

The effects of climate change will be disproportionately felt by future generations. We recognise that we have a role to play in managing our environmental impacts responsibly, which is why we launched our Big Green Plan in 2019. This lays out our ambitious commitments for how we will become a company that gives more than it takes.

As a business with markets on opposite sides of the globe, these goals do pose a challenge to our ways of working. Nonetheless we are serious about making sustainability central to how we do business.

This report captures the first steps we have taken so far in our journey towards a more sustainable future. We achieved a lot in 2019 but recognise that there are still complex challenges ahead. This coming year will see us implement more of our Big Green Plan. These actions will ensure we're able to continue feeding our babies the best of today, whilst ensuring the protection of tomorrow's environment.



**Piers Buck**  
Little Freddie's food-loving dad





# Our First Steps



550,000 pouches saved from landfill through our zero-waste recycling scheme

24,000 meals donated to our charity partner The Felix Project



Over 150 hours of community volunteering by the London-based team



Officially green, now ISO14001 certified

100% of primary cardboard packaging from sustainable sources



Empowering 480 smallholder pineapple farmers in Madagascar

Recognised by 4 awarding bodies for our sustainability initiatives





# Our Story



**Founder Piers is a foodie at heart. Interested in food from a young age, one of his earliest childhood memories is going to the food markets in Paris where he lived for the first ten years of his life.**

When it came to feeding his children, Piers felt the existing options were limited, with a distinct lack of quality. Everything was bland and generic, a world apart from the Parisian food markets where apples are sold by their variety, and vegetables by where they are from.

At its heart Little Freddie is about using high quality, premium, sophisticated ingredients from farmers we know and trust. We pioneered the use of Golden Delicious and Pink Lady apples, grass-fed British beef, authentic Parmigiano Reggiano DOP, West Country mature cheddar, and gilt-head sea bream to name but a few. We always place taste and quality above price, which is why we use 20% beef and chicken in our recipes, double that of other brands.

Having sourced the highest quality ingredients, Piers, alongside Little Freddie's paediatric nutritionist Jo Rayner and our team of chefs, turn these super ingredients into wholesome recipes, worthy of the choosiest little gastronome.

**Our current range of 70 certified organic products includes fruit and vegetable purees, meals, finger foods and cereals.**



# Taking Responsibility

As a growing modern business, it's vital that **we acknowledge our environmental impact and broader social responsibility**. By doing so, we're able to identify where we are currently making progress and where we can do more.

One **primary objective for 2019** was to implement the ISO 14001 standard – an international certification which helps to monitor, manage and reduce the exposure of businesses to environmental and social challenges.

We're proud to say that from a standing start and with no sustainability processes in place, **we successfully achieved certification in September 2019**.

Since then, we've adopted **a long-term holistic approach to sustainability** which we have named the **Big Green Plan**. This will keep us on track for achieving all environmental and social targets included in this strategy, whilst always challenging us to be a better, more accountable business.

2019 was a big year. We're pleased to be sharing the first of many updates with you as we continue to make progress.





# Our Passion for Quality

To ensure we continuously meet our own rigorous set of standards, we only work with farmers who share our passion for quality, safety and best practice.

“I really enjoy working with the innovative team at Little Freddie who welcome guidance on achieving healthier, improved and nutritious products for little ones. It’s amazing just how much work goes into the development, assessment, production and marketing of the products, it’s great to be involved with such a highly skilled, dynamic team.”

**Jo Rayner**  
Little Freddie’s Paediatric Nutritionist



## 100% Organic

We believe in food as nature intended, free from pesticides, hormones or other unnatural chemicals. That’s why, since the beginning, we have been certified as organic by accreditation bodies who independently assure that we employ the most stringent controls on our supply chain. As concerned parents and consumers, this should give you further assurances that we are providing food of the utmost quality to your family.

## Always Nutritious

When it comes to nutrition, we hold ourselves to the highest standard. This is a core value of Little Freddie.

- ✓ We never add sugar, salt, preservatives or artificial flavourings to any of our recipes.
- ✓ Our in-house development team creates every recipe alongside our highly experienced paediatric nutritionist.
- ✓ Our meals are made using ingredients in the proportions you would at home, with 20% chicken or beef in each pouch, double the meat content of other brands. This makes them naturally high in protein and a natural source of iron.
- ✓ To create even more nutritious finger foods, we pioneered the use of multigrain and pulses such as protein-rich chickpeas and quinoa.



# Our No Compromise Approach

## Food Safety

We never compromise on food safety. We ensure that our business not only meets, but exceeds the standards required in the baby food industry. This is our promise to you.

This ensures that the consumer can be confident they are purchasing food made to the most stringent of standards of safety, quality and legality.

## Positive Release Programme

Every single batch we produce undergoes a minimum of 400 tests for physical, chemical and microbiological contaminants to provide parents with peace of mind.

## Traceability

We place product provenance at the heart of our sourcing philosophy. Our standards require us to not only source our ingredients from the best suppliers we can find, but ensure we have full traceability of that supply chain.

We visit all suppliers on-site before any contracts are signed. We are members of Supplier Ethical Data Exchange (Sedex) and have mandated that all our suppliers become members.

Through Sedex, suppliers complete a rigorous assessment that enables us to:

- ☒ Measure and assess how our suppliers perform across environmental and social issues.
- ☒ Identify opportunities for improvement.
- ☒ Build and improve relationships with our suppliers.
- ☒ Provide action plans that help raise supply chain standards.



# Our Big Green Plan

Sustainability is no longer a nice to do, it's a need to do.

Our Big Green Plan was created with one simple aim in mind: for Little Freddie to become a business that gives more than it takes. We understand this vision will only be achieved if we move to a more circular business model, one which maximises resources and minimises waste along the supply chain. As well as increasing efficiency and the value of our products.

With this in mind, we took part in an extensive consultation in partnership with all of our stakeholders and several industry experts, to identify areas of our business which could become more circular. As a result, we have aligned our work to the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which aim to build a better world for both people and planet.





# Planet

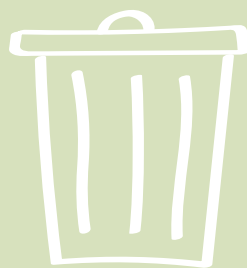


Climate change is the single greatest threat facing our planet. Extreme weather events induced by climate change are becoming more frequent and more catastrophic. If we are to help our planet stay below 1.5°C of warming, urgent action is required.

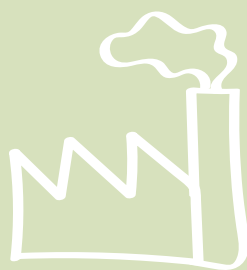
We rely on our planet’s natural resources to produce our products, generating waste and greenhouse gas emissions in the process. Our Planet pillar priorities are: cutting our carbon emissions, managing our water impact, and sending zero food waste to landfill.

For 2019 we chose to focus on reducing food waste, a critical part of the fight against climate change. This also helps us to support vulnerable communities through donating our surplus food.

For 2020 we will air freight less than 5% of our products to reduce the carbon intensity of our business.



**Zero food waste sent to landfill in 2019.**



**1.25 tonnes of food waste recycled from our offices which generated 375kWh of energy.**



**Committed to a 10% reduction in surplus food each year.**



**9 tonnes of surplus food donated to charity partners The Felix Project, City Harvest and FareShare.**



**Raised £3k through our ‘Help Feed a Family this Christmas’ campaign on behalf of The Felix Project.**

**Our Planet priorities contribute to SDG 2, 6, 12, 13.**





# People



Modern slavery remains a shocking reality with an estimated 46 million worldwide, 1 in 4 victims being children. Because of the complexity of supply chains, it is rarely possible to be certain that a product has or has not been produced using slavery.

As a global business, we cannot be ignorant to injustices that could be occurring within our operations. As such our People pillar represents those relationships that matter the most to Little Freddie. This includes our workers, employees, business partners and of course our customers.

2019 saw the deployment of our long-term strategy to enhance the welfare of our workers, raise working conditions and implement learnings that support responsible business practices.

In 2020, the focus will be on working with our suppliers, lending our time and resource to roll out training programmes on ethical labour practices.



As part of our new supplier on-boarding audit, our founder Piers visited suppliers in Sri Lanka, Madagascar, Germany, Poland, Italy and the UK.



100% of our suppliers completed rigorous Sedex assessments, enabling us to identify opportunities for improvement and to reduce risk.



Published our first UK Modern Slavery Statement, outlining how we will prevent modern slavery in our business.



Launched our first social project to support 480 smallholder pineapple farmers in Madagascar.



Gave significant time, resource and expertise to support all new suppliers launching with Sedex.

Our People priorities contribute to SDG 2, 3, 5, 8, 17.





# Packaging



Packaging is a critical part of any food business as it protects the safety and quality of products. Yet the growing problem of plastic waste entering the natural environment has led to a global demand for change. The linear model of take, make and dispose is no longer an accepted business activity.

With our Packaging agenda, we are seeking to minimise the environmental impacts of our packaging. In 2019 we employed the use of innovative technology to help Little Freddie become a more ‘circular business’, by ensuring no materials are sent to landfill.

In 2020 we will expand the scheme to include all baby food brands and increase its availability across other retailers.



First UK baby food brand to launch a zero-waste-to-landfill pouch recycling scheme.



Further increased availability of the scheme through listings in key retailers.



Recognised for our recycling programme across four industry awards.



100% of our primary cardboard packaging comes from responsibly sourced FSC certified forests (up from 50% at beginning of the year).

CO<sub>2</sub>

Parents use a prepaid recyclable mailbag to return their empty pouches free of charge. Disposal of baby food pouches in this way has a 90% smaller carbon footprint than other disposal methods.



In 2019 550,000 pouches were saved from landfill through our recycling scheme.



Our Packaging priorities contribute to SDG 12, 17.





# Our 2020 Steps

We see three fundamental challenges that will continue to shape our business and the wider industry agenda:

Climate Change  
Waste Reduction  
Child Obesity







# 1. Combating Climate Change

The impacts of climate change are far-reaching and severe. By 2050, the productivity of global agriculture is expected to have dropped by 17% – that’s a shocking figure. Rising temperatures, increasing soil erosion and unpredictable rainfall will not only disrupt food supplies but will cause havoc to those whose lives are reliant on our natural environment.

In beautiful Madagascar, our pineapple supplier is particularly at risk. Their smallholder farmers lack the skills for adapting to changing weather patterns, which impacts their ability to earn a living. Following a research trip in 2019, we learnt there was no available climate change adaptation funding or services for these farmers.

Partnering with our pineapple supplier, we took the opportunity to invest in a training programme that would teach good agricultural practices and innovative techniques to all 480 smallholder farmers. This won’t just increase productivity, it will guarantee income for these vulnerable farmers.

The project will begin in early 2020, for an initial three year period. We’re looking forward to seeing the positive impact it will have.



## 2. Waste Reduction

The 'Blue Planet Effect' has sharpened the focus on plastic waste, shifting it from a conservationist concern into an everyday, mainstream issue.

The UK generates around 30 million tonnes of household waste every year – of which 5.9 million tonnes is packaging. This doesn't need to be the case – studies show that 80% of what ends up in waste disposal could in fact be recycled or reused. On top of this, we are throwing away 7.2 million tonnes of food and drink when we could be consuming 4.4 million tonnes of this.

We take waste reduction very seriously. Our aim is to be using materials which are completely reusable, recyclable or compostable before 2025.

From discussing future trends to working on the latest innovations with suppliers, we feel positive about the steps we're taking to achieve this. Starting in 2020, we are reducing our packaging intensity and we're looking at our ways to do even more.





### 3. Childhood Obesity and Malnutrition

In 2019 there were 600 obesity related hospital admissions for under 5's, a number which has doubled in the last 5 years alone.

- Nearly a quarter of children aged five to six are overweight or obese.
- 13% of 3-year olds have tooth decay.
- 9/10 tooth extractions of naught to five-year olds are due to preventable tooth decay.

Misleading labelling and marketing around nutritional composition has caused confusion for parents. All this will have a profound impact on children's eating habits, diet and dental health in the future.

In 2020 Public Health England will bring out guidelines on improving infant nutrition. We agree with their principals and will be reformulating our recipes or updating packaging in the few instances this may be necessary.

In the meantime we have taken the below steps:

- Removed any products from our range that may not meet the draft guidelines.
- We have reformulated recipes to remove unnecessary naturally occurring sugar.
- Lobbied policy makers to raise the national standards.



# What Our Customers Think



'Love the pouches! Original flavours and esp love the fact that they can be sent back for recycling!'

Mum of 2, 28  
Instagram

'I hadn't actually heard of your brand before. But now we're obsessed and it's the only pouches he eats without fuss now!! I also love that you have a no waste to landfill policy!!'

Dad of 2, 38  
Twitter

'Using these and loving them!!!! Thanks so much for making the packaging recyclable'

Mum of 3, 37  
Instagram

'Well done!! You deserve it! My little boy loves your meals and the fact I can recycle them is amazing!! Win win from me.'

Mum of 1, 31  
Facebook

'So good to see baby companies taking a stand and helping our environment!'

Grandma of 7, 72  
Facebook

'Amazing pouches. My daughter adores them and they are so healthy and recyclable.'

Dad of 1, 30  
Instagram



# Looking a Bit Further Ahead

In the previous pages we have provided some clearly defined targets, the below outlines our longer term goals and aspirations:



When we look at the environmental impact of our packaging, we are conscious our pouches use plastic and are unable to be recycled kerbside. **We want our pouches to be recycled domestically by 2023.**



**We see an opportunity to source more locally.** The first step will be to ensure our product development plans give priority to local ingredients.



**On nutrition we will continue to set the category a high bar.** Naturally occurring sugar is our key focus and we will reformulate any product that exceeds our guidelines.



We will take the learnings from our Madagascan social impact project to **support at least two high risk suppliers in our supply chain.**

