



Caring for our future

Corporate Social Responsibility Report 2024/2025



A business built on family values

We started as a small family butcher which was opened and run by the Browns family in Biggar, Scotland in 1885. In 1985 the company was bought by the Godfrey family.

We believe Corporate Social Responsibility is a 'journey'. We still uphold our original family values, but have also introduced new ones to stay at the forefront of our industry and ensure we continue to grow. We listen and learn in order to deliver sustainable change which may benefit all our stakeholders. Our Corporate Social Responsibility policies will continue to remain at the very H.E.A.R.T of our business.

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Our values set us apart

Corporate responsibility aims to improve stakeholder relations at every level.

We are committed to looking after our people, our customers, our communities and our planet, which we believe comes through teamwork and collective, collaborative action.

We want to deliver quality value food to all, using responsibly and sustainably sourced ingredients. We are working constantly to reduce our impact on the environment and wherever possible make decisions which support ethically oriented practices. We strive to be an employer of choice, helping people become the best they can be; through skills development and supported learning.

We continue to work with and support our local communities to fulfil our corporate responsibilities – supporting charities and the development of communities and people through mentoring and training. We believe the education of future generations is crucial and we do what we can to support local schools, colleges and other educational institutions – whether it be donating equipment or mentoring students in order to support collaborative communities of practice.

You can rest assured; we are working hard to keep the nation fed in not only body; but also mind and spirit.

Wayne Godfrey CEO



Our story began in 1885

We are extremely proud of our Scottish heritage. From humble beginnings in 1885, the Browns family opened a small butcher shop in Biggar in the Scottish borders, curing all their own bacon and distributing products by horse and cart throughout Lanarkshire and surrounding areas.

The Godfrey family bought the business in the late 1980's – retaining the original family core values and traditions whilst building, expanding, and developing the business into the Browns Food Group we see today.

The Browns Food Group operates from seven manufacturing sites throughout the UK offering a variety of expertise and a comprehensive range of quality food products.



1885

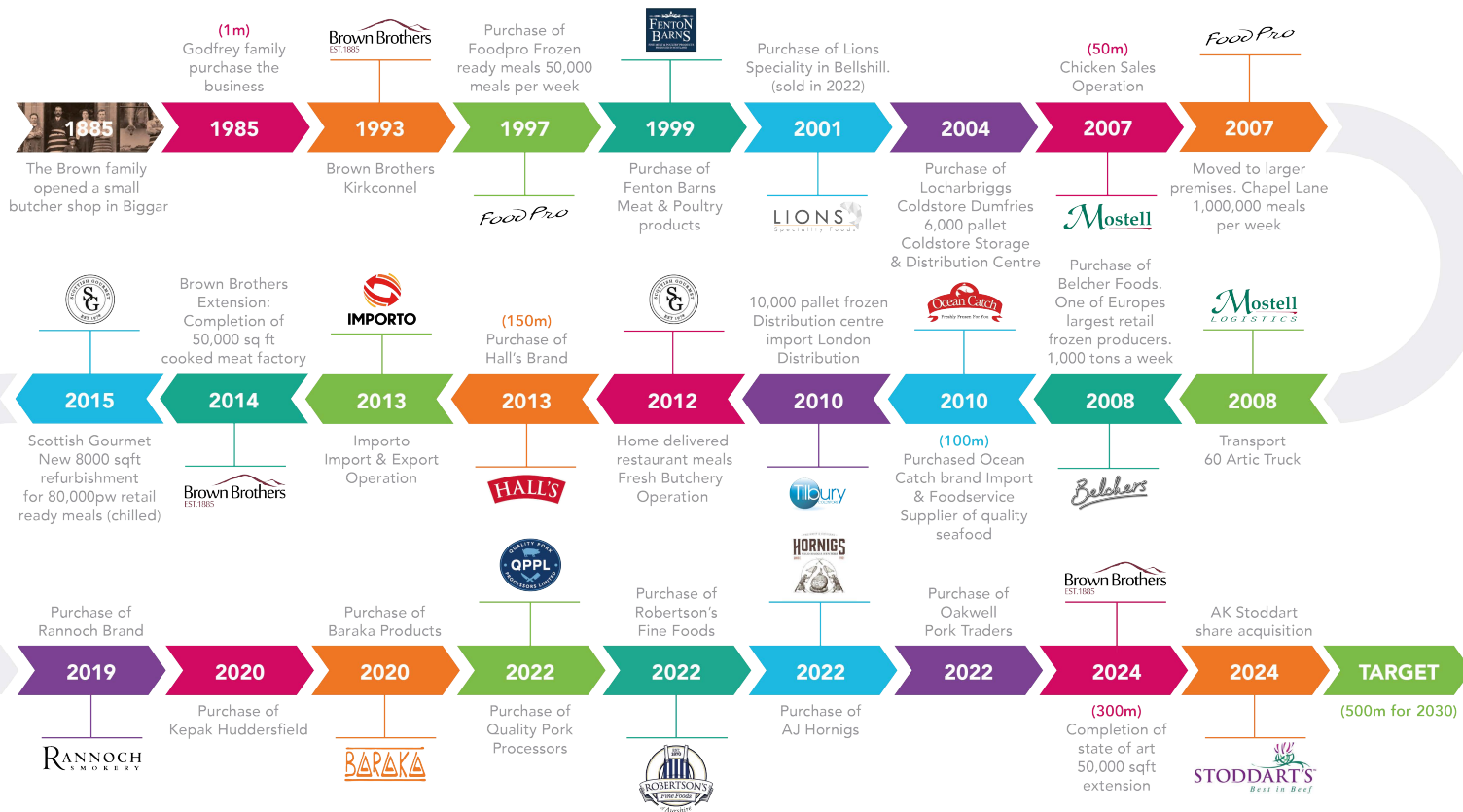
1985

1993

1997



About us



Our values



Values are at the heart of everything

Honesty - We are following ethical business practices

Environment - Minimising environmental impact

Action - Through training and education

Responsibility - Support and engage with stakeholders

Teams - Working in collaborative partnerships

H.E.A.R.T. is important to us and reflects our company values and culture. It is our corporate citizenship and is central to everything we do.

It shows our companies commitment to manage the social, economic and environmental effects of our operations. It helps us follow ethical business practices and allows us to give back to our communities and stakeholders.

These **H.E.A.R.T** values adapt to and remain central to every aspect and policy within our business, including Corporate Social Responsibility strategy.



People are at the heart of our business

People are always and will continue to be at the H.E.A.R.T of our business. Our aim is to inspire and develop our people to be the best they can be.

We respect and value our employees and encourage their development and careers with us. They are the key to our success, and we support them with their goals and ambitions. We celebrate cultural and racial diversity within our workforce, promoting collaborative working environments. We are stronger together than as individuals, teams goals and visions, working together to support the aims of the organisation.

The training and development of our workforce is at the forefront of our policies. We are a fully accredited training centre for Food Hygiene, SVQ (Scottish Vocational Qualifications) and CPC with fully trained internal verifiers.

We celebrate our success stories, share our knowledge, and are proud of what our people achieve within the Browns Group family.



Awards & Initiatives



2023

We have received a Bronze Award from Grocery Aid in recognition of support the Group has already completed and continues to provide.



2020

We started the Food & Drink Technology Foundation Apprenticeships. Dumfries & Galloway “Champion in Developing the Young Workforce”
Sarah Britton – Browns Training Co-Ordinator



2019

Winners of the Herald Outstanding Family Business Award.



2018

Dumfries & Galloway “Champion in Developing the Young Workforce”
Bob Beattie – Browns NPD & Sales Support Manager



2016

FoodPro winners of the best chilled supplier at the Food Awards in England.



People and Partners



Success Stories

We are passionate about developing talent and building careers.

Here is an introduction to some of the employees success stories within the careers section of the Browns Food Group website.

Full success stories available here:
careers.brownsfoodgroup.com/success-stories



"Browns Food Group gave me the opportunity to gain work experience in the Design and Marketing Department"



"I can get involved in and dealing with suppliers from all over the world means my job is never boring"



"I am now Hatch Supervisor; using my knowledge and experience to spot issues and solve problems"



"My time management skills have never been so good! I fell into the food industry and have not looked back since"



"I'm responsible for managing the site's Allergen & Species control and have become part of the validation team on site"



"I am able to develop new, bespoke products for customers and collaborate with them on menu ideas"



"My skills continue to grow & develop, with me being given more responsibility to work on larger design projects"



"I have been able to help contribute to the company's strategic plans moving forward"



"I am looking forward to progressing my career within the company and I am excited to see what I can achieve"



"I have a lot of independence in my role allowing me to explore new tasks and areas within the HR remit"

Our journey to net zero

Browns Food Group is committed to achieving net zero and is actively working with government bodies and advisors to help us reduce our carbon footprint.

We have already started changes within the Group to support Scope 1 emissions (from sources controlled/owned by the organisation) & Scope 2 (indirect emissions), and remain committed to pushing harder and faster over the coming years.

A few examples of what we have been doing are below:

- LED Light Conversion Project: We're actively replacing all office and factory lighting with advanced LED technology. Our new extension is also fully equipped with LED lighting.
- Waste heat conversion on CO2 refrigeration plant. We use all waste heat from our product cooling operation on our latest blast chill to heat water to 60c and feed into hot water requirements
- Waste heat economiser on state of art boiler. Full boiler replacement 3 years ago with modified economiser to recycle waste heat to preheat water for boiling
- Solar panels installed for new roof. 700 kWh system
- Engaging with Mabbett on how to support D&G journey to net zero. This is a government funded initiative to support all companies on the mission
- Refrigeration in new Low Risk is all CO2
- Employment of environmental graduate and the implementation of the environmental & sustainable working group.



Our impact can be positive

We all have a responsibility to protect and sustain the environment we are living and working within.

We're dedicated to minimizing our environmental impact and have already implemented initiatives like the refrigeration program to reduce our GWP and recycling and packaging programs to minimize waste.

We have demonstrated this in a variety of initiatives:

- Embracing new technologies – such as capturing waste heat from refrigeration systems to heat water used for cleaning, operations and offsetting energy usage
- Reducing vehicle emissions - purchasing the most efficient haulage trucks meeting the latest EU missions targets
- Removing black plastic from sites
- Utilising recyclable materials in cooked meat packaging
- Making our transport as efficient as possible – phasing out of diesel cars and replacing with electric vehicles
- Powering our sites in the most energy efficient ways – capturing heat from steam generation & re-using energy for hot water & heating facilities
- Utilising recyclable material in cardboard (cartons, boxes and sleeves)
- Reviewing refrigeration requirement and investing in CO2 where applicable



Our Environment



2020

- 95% all black plastic removed from site
- 78% all retail cooked meat packs now in recyclable plastic for base
- 100% Lidl cooked meat pack in recyclable plastic for base
- Minimum of 50% post-consumer waste used in our RPET material
- Ecopet material launched

2021/22

- Purchased 14 FULLY electric cars, 4 Hybrid cars and a further 10 Hybrid cars on order
- Increased the capacity of electric charging points at the Kirkconnel site to a total of 20
- A further total of 9 charging points at a variety of sites including Foodpro, Locharbriggs, Fenton Barns, Tilbury & Scottish Gourmet
- Zero black plastic on site
- 100% cooked meat in to be recyclable base web

2023

- Purchased Hybrid or fully electric cars
- Employment of environmental graduate
- Setting up of our environmental and sustainable working group
- The awarding of Bronze EcoVadis
- Investment in new CO2 refrigeration plant at Kirkconnel



2024 and beyond...

We continue to make steps within our net zero journey taking advice from experts and actively working towards the following areas to support our journey.

- Continue to look at recyclable lidding films
- Move to 100% recyclable pre formed trays
- Material reduction in corrugate and box rationalisation
- Introduced environmental module within the induction, increasing the knowledge and skills of our employees at all levels
- Carrying out a carbon footprint assessment – where we are now and where we want to be
- Maintaining reviews of our energy consumption and work on setting KPI against our base year
- Looking at our supply chains in relation to **Scope 3** activities
- Company car fleet conversion to electric or Hybrid. To be completed by 2025 over 50% already done. We have installed over 30 charging stations across the group and funded employees homes to be fitted with chargers as required



2024 and beyond...

- Route planning software to reduce road miles for our logistics
- Continue to replace old power hungry equipment for new less power demanding
- CHP waste recovery of heat is covering a lot of HOS gas that they needed for the boiler. Now almost turned off all together.
- All food waste /effluent waste going to AD which naturally will off set, current evaluating what the offsetting data is on this
- More use of teams /remote meeting technology. Assisted in part by pandemic but helping with unnecessary travel and flights etc
- Browns brothers site is surrounded by wind farms and consideration for engaging to procure a supply or even commission our own turbine
- We understand the responsibility we have to target net zero and we are committed to doing what it takes to achieving this by pledge to SBTi
- Review of effectiveness of solar electric trailers
- Plan to purchase and replace existing fleet with advanced eco commercial trucks



We invest in our community

We are a family business so 'community' is important to us.

We encourage and support young people through our involvement with local schools & colleges and support over 100 small initiatives and causes each year. This may be from supplying 'waterproof' garments for outdoor activities to a local primary school, to being mentors to encourage and support young adults into the world of work; through apprenticeships and work placements within our many sites.

This generation are the workforce of the future and we have a responsibility to guide and assist their entry into the diverse marketplaces of today's modern business environments. Our Foodpro site based in Wigan, in the North West of England for example as part of Wigan Council's 'Deal for Business' campaign, have enlisted their site HR Manager to become a mentor at Wigan Youth Zone. This involves working closely with young people to help develop their "life skills" and also offering voluntary administrative work placements to those who are enrolled on the employability course at the organisation. Helping future generations develop their skills in order to take advantage of economic and job opportunities in the area.

Likewise, we remain actively involved with a variety of charities via fundraising activities and providing financial support. We are proud to take part in charity sporting activities – these have included a charity golf day to support Rainbows, a hospice for children and a 10k race which raised over £1,115 for Children in need. Browns Food Group strive for excellence every step of the way.



The Brick Project

FoodPro join forces with local Wigan charity to help support their local community and people in crisis.

The Brick Project is a charity that offers services to people who are homeless, in poverty or facing debt crisis. The services run by the Brick Project includes our Crisis Intervention Service and Wigan's largest Food Bank. Both are managed by a small staff team but the main support to our service users is delivered by volunteers. The Brick also operates statutory tendered projects offering support to people in their tenancies; ensuring people newly homeless move quickly into accommodation and ensuring that homeless people receive good health care and support if in hospital. Staff and volunteers at the Brick Project help people tackle the root causes of homelessness, debt, poverty, and hunger.

Rebecca McCarthy HR Manager and Site Director Matt Brindley at FoodPro have developed a network and ongoing working relationship with the charity, in a bid to further support the local Wigan community. FoodPro are now the official food manufacturing partner of The Brick working together to provide long term and sustainable employment for local people who have faced crisis in their life including homelessness.

In collaboration with Wigan and Leigh College and JobCentre Plus, FoodPro runs quarterly Sector Based Work Academies (SWAP) to help long term unemployed people return to paid work. In addition, FoodPro are working with New Futures to provide employment to ex-offenders on their release from local prisons and are also looking to provide employment to refugees by working alongside Breaking Barriers and Wigan Council.



Community Values



Wherever possible Browns Food Group are looking to create networks with like minded companies regarding their Corporate Responsibility ethos and policies.

Eco Tree Planting

Working with Advanced Water Technologies – the Group's FoodPro site in the North West of England have helped support a nationwide campaign run by the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust to plant more native broadleaf trees to offset carbon emissions in the UK.

Education Networking

Embarking on projects with local education providers – The Sanquhar Academy project to design and develop a new product for the coronation of King Charles III in order to produce a recipe book with all proceeds going to nominated charities.



Charities

Here at Browns Food Group we continue to invest in our local communities and support both local and National charities wherever we can. We are proud to be officially affiliated to:



Meals & More

As an official partner of the Meals and More initiative – Browns Food Group is proud to continue to support the charitable programme established by Brakes in 2015, which aims to tackle child poverty and to help grow support for grassroots organisations running holiday clubs for children across the UK.

Echoing our own company values, 'Meals & More' is a catalyst for positive change, bringing like minded people together, creating the opportunity to improve life chances, contributing to happier, healthier children and families. Through provision of nutritious food and enriching educational and physical activities.



Charities



WHITELEYS RETREAT

Whiteleys Retreat

Based in Ayrshire – Whiteleys Retreat is a charity which provides free therapeutic short breaks for children, young people and their families who have cancer and other life altering illnesses.

The therapeutic breaks enable precious memories to be made as a family in a relaxing and caring environment.

The Browns Food Group have also raised monies and offered to support to many other charities – including The British Heart Foundation, Rainbows Hospice and MacMillan Cancer to name but a few.





Thank you.