

## **Modern Slavery Statement**

### **Annual Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement**

#### **Pursuant to the Modern Slavery Act 2015**

This is our second statement to outline the steps we are taking as an organisation to ensure that slavery and human trafficking is not taking place in our business and the supply chains which serve it. This statement explains what we did in our financial year ending 31 July 2019 and gives details of our planned actions for our current financial year ending 31 July 2020.

We are a family business and care very genuinely for the welfare of our colleagues, customers and all those who work in our supply chain providing goods or services.

#### **Our Business**

Our company is registered in the UK and our business comprises 16 garden centres with café bars all located in the South East of England. We are therefore governed and regulated by UK law. We do not employ anyone outside the UK. We take pride in complying with both the letter and the spirit of UK employment law and best practice and seek to encourage healthy working relationships and a culture of openness throughout our business. This approach is backed up by relevant policies including our whistle blowing policy.

We apply robust recruitment processes. We check that all those we employ have the correct documentation to demonstrate they are legally entitled to work in the UK. All our staff are paid above the minimum wage and have reached school leaving age. We do not use agency workers, other than for short term sickness or vacancy cover. Whenever we need agency staff we employ reputable UK employment agencies

#### **Our Modern Slavery Policy**

Our policy is a zero -tolerance approach to Modern Slavery. It is vital that all our business relationships are conducted ethically, with integrity and transparency. We are committed to implementing and enforcing effective systems and controls to ensure that Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking are not taking place anywhere within our business or its supply chains.

#### **Our Supply Chain**

Our supply chain is complex because of the range of plants and other goods we offer for sale to our customers and the range of food we serve in our café bars. Well over 80% of the plants we sell come from UK nurseries. Most of our other products are purchased from UK suppliers with some from EU and EEA suppliers. A very small minority is purchased from non UK, EU or EEA sources.

## **What actions have we taken since our last statement and what actions are we taking?**

### 1.Tool kits and Training.

In 2018 we registered with the Stronger2gether, a collaborative organisation comprising many well-known retailers, other brand leaders and charities which provides guidance, training and other tools on Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking. The senior head office team including the Chairman, Managing Director, Finance Director, Purchasing Director and the Heads of HR, marketing, operations and catering undertook a full day training course given by a Stronger2gether tutor at our Group Office in March 2019. This training has then been cascaded down to our garden centre managers. We are members of a buying group of like-minded family garden centre businesses who co-operate in some buying and marketing activities. We have cascaded our training to fellow members at our annual HR community meeting and we have discussed the issue with the owners of those businesses too. Further training will be given to the relevant people within our organisation during the course of the year. Those who have already been given training will receive annual refresher training.

### 2. Our Supply Chain.

Whilst we have clear visibility of our direct suppliers it becomes more complex the further down the supply chain. In order to assist us in taking steps to identify possible issues in our supply chain we are investigating joining Sedex either in our own capacity or in conjunction with other members of our buying group. Membership is expected to be in place early in 2020. Sedex is a global membership organisation dedicated to driving improvements in ethical and responsible business practices in global supply chains. They assist buyers and suppliers to share and exchange data, helping to better manage social and environmental risks within their supply chain, and positively impact responsible sourcing. Sedex provides a range of tools, services, guidance and training to help companies map and manage risks in their supply chain, with over 50,000 members in 155 countries, across 35 industry sectors, including food, agriculture, financial services, clothing and apparel, packaging and chemicals.

### 3. Supplier Code of Conduct.

Our supplier code of conduct has been approved by the Board. We expect our suppliers of goods or services to accept our code of conduct or be able to demonstrate equally robust policies and procedures in their own business. If we find instances of non-compliance and/or non-cooperation we will consider what remedial action to take on a case by case basis. this may mean we decide not to take on a new supplier or to cease to trade with an existing supplier. We will also monitor suppliers failing to cooperate or considered high risk. Where suppliers are manufacturing in countries where modern slavery is a known to be prevalent, we will seek further assurance and evidence of compliance from those suppliers and/or through the Sedex scheme as applicable. Such suppliers will be considered high risk until satisfactory evidence of compliance is received.

We shall continue to measure our progress and effectiveness going forward and continue to raise awareness of the risks amongst relevant members of our team, our suppliers and our buying group.

Approved by the Board of Directors on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2019

Signed by

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Martin Breddy', with a long horizontal flourish extending from the bottom right of the signature.

Martin Breddy

Managing Director

14<sup>th</sup> November 2019