



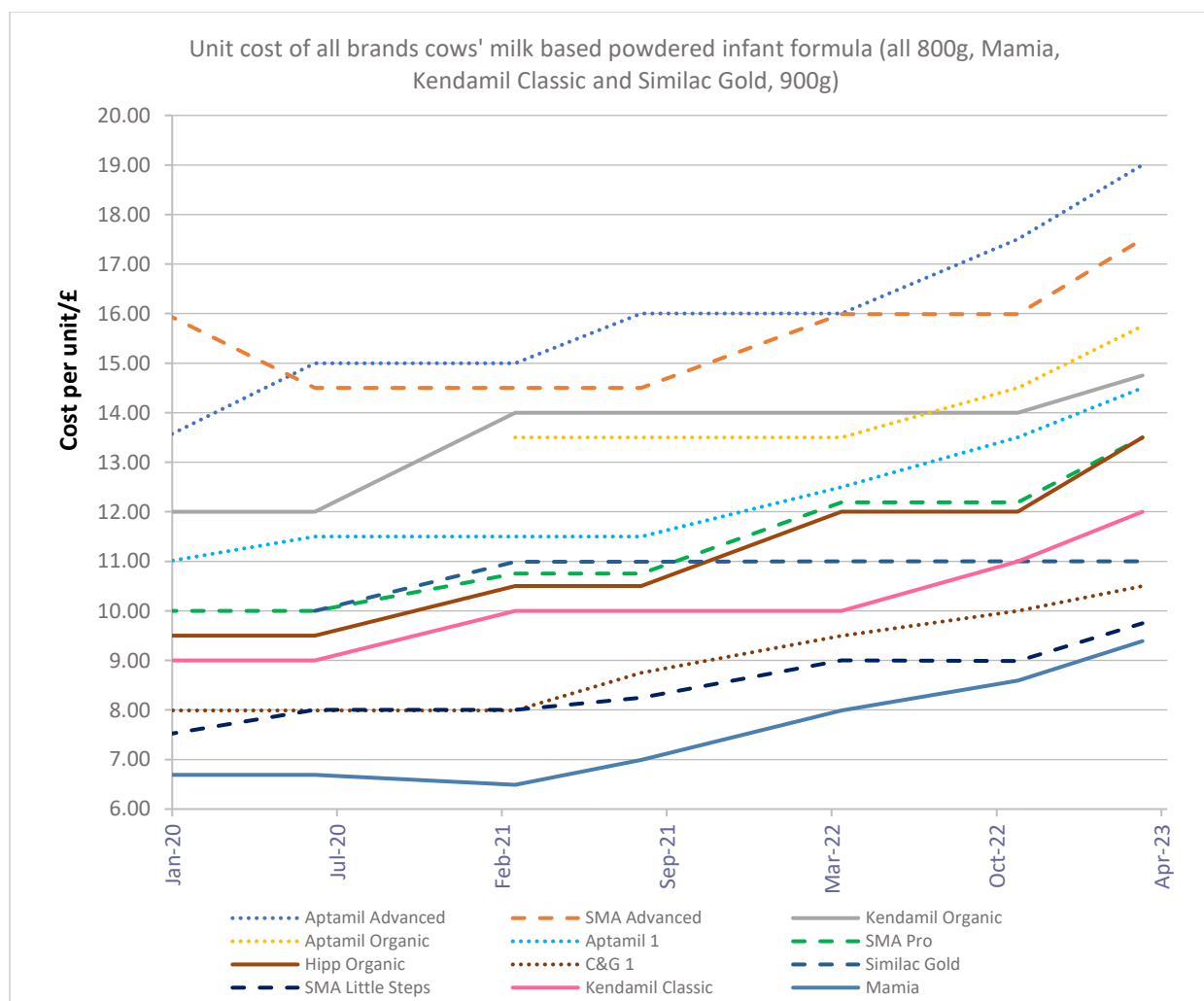
Cost of powdered infant formulas in the UK: How have they changed since January 2020?

May 2023

Cost of infant milks in the UK: How have they changed since January 2020?

Our routine price monitoring shows that the cost of infant formula had begun to rise comparatively rapidly after February 2021, preceding general food price rises. Graph 1 shows that between March 2021 and April 2023 the unit price of powdered cows' milk based first infant formulas rose by an average of 22%.

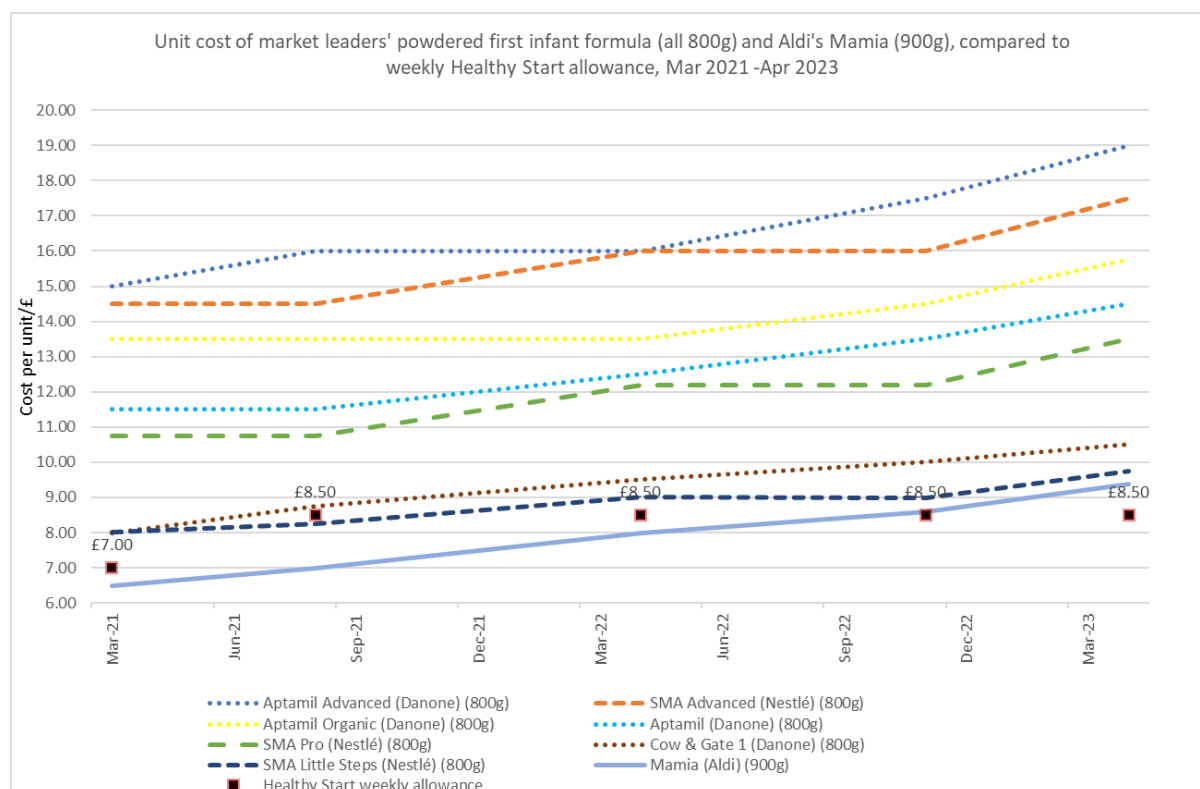
Graph 1. Unit cost of all brands cows' milk based powdered infant formula



Graph 2 shows the change in unit price of the top three selling brands of powdered first infant formula as well as the least expensive but less widely available Aldi Mamia infant formula over that time frame. It shows that the most widely available and purchased infant formulas have increased in price by between 17% (Aptamil Organic) and 31% (Cow & Gate) and Aldi's Mamia increased by 45%.

There are no first infant formulas that are affordable with the Healthy Start allowance, which is £8.50/week, or £34/month.

Graph 2. Unit cost of market leaders' powdered first infant formula and Aldi's Mamia compared to the weekly Healthy Start allowance



What does this mean for the cost of feeding an infant?

All infant formula must meet regulations on nutrition composition. But while the average cost per 800g/tin of the seven leading brand products is currently £14.36, the range is £9.75 to £19.00, and the single own-brand product costs £9.39 per 900g/tin. When comparing costs to find the least expensive product to feed an infant, it is important to compare the cost of products on the basis of reconstituted formula as pack sizes and the ratio of powder to water required differs between brands. We have calculated from the unit cost of products that despite being nutritionally comparable, the monthly cost of feeding a 10-week-old baby infant formula using the seven leading brand powdered infant formula products is between £44 and £88. This compares to a cost of £39/month for Aldi Mamia, the only own-brand product.

The impact of the rising costs of infant formula for young families is explored in greater detail in our briefing note [‘What the Cost of Living Crisis means for the diets of infants and young children and recommended actions’](#).