

A Place of Beauty



A model is a person who is employed to display, advertise and promote commercial products (notably fashion clothing) or to serve as a subject of works of art. It is hardly Milan, Paris or New York but Newmains can fairly claim to have a model butchers' shop.

The design is chic, the house style is impressive and when comes to cuts they are clean and smart. Howiesons in Newmains has a modern fresh approach to selling red meat and make products to satisfy every taste.

It is only five miles south of the M8 at Junction 6 but it would be no surprise that discerning buyers are making their way to this North Lanarkshire town from far and wide. Although it boasts a population of over 5000 it is sometimes considered a suburb of Wishaw but Willie Howieson had built up a business worthy of putting Newmains firmly on the map.

Situated on the main road with limited parking at the door, Howiesons stands out with its impressive shop front and all revealing look. Automatic doors remove the final barrier and you are immediately attracted to great range of fresh meat, pastries and confectionary on display.



More pictures at:-

<https://picasaweb.google.com/SFMTA3/HOWIESONS110413#>



The display counters are Eurocryor, the scales are Bizerba and the walls are deliberately plain. There is Baro lighting, Dyson hand drier and air conditioning that all adds to the clean, tidy and inviting appearance.

This shop has evolved over the years since Willie's father, also Willie turned a cottage into a butchers' shop in 1972. A refit in 1992 made the first real impact but then a radical rethink in 2008 made a huge difference. Willie's vision was to open up the shop frontage, knock down walls to allow customers to see his staff in action and contract Watco to replace his dated display cases.



Howiesons product range moved with the times too. Scotch Beef sourced from nearby Shotts Abattoir is still the mainstay of the trade but there has been a marked trend towards chicken and kitchen ready products. Willie praises Dalziel's Mike Winrow for being a major influence and encouraging a range that is interesting and continually refreshed.



There is a cooked meat section with cooked gammon and chopped pork, sliced to order, the best sellers. Of the ready to eat products, by far the greatest attraction is the cakes and bakery items. Rolls are freshly baked in house and there is a large array of both savoury and sweet pastry products.





All this is possible because at the rear of the premises there is an ideally fitted out bakery production area with plenty of space to maximise output. Here every day the baker, Scott and his very able assistant, Isla, bake the special products that really make Howiesons stand out.

This is very necessary in an age that still suffers from austerity and the continuing lack of spending power. But trend setting Howiesons are always looking for the step beyond that will give them the edge. All the kitchen ready products are sealed using an Enterpac machine and every purchase is accompanied by a label that has been attached giving cooking instructions.

Efficiency is almost tangible as Willie proudly escorts you around his premises. Everything has its place and it is no surprise to discover that he is perfecting a computer Christmas ordering system using Eureka.





Like everywhere else, the challenge in Newmain is getting the customers through the doors. Willie and his staff of 12 work hard at this. It is all very well having great meat and great products. Uniformity of cut and trim is guaranteed but it is the engaging staff that gives that warm appreciated feeling that has a lasting effect.

Lots of the customers are called by their first names, assistants tend to know what each comes in for and Willie admits to being near obsessive that customers are greeted with a "hello" and "cheerio". Service and skills are to the highest standard and to ensure everybody knows what is expected, the business makes full use of all the vocational qualifications available through Scottish Meat Training.

This is a butchers' shop any butcher would love to run. It has been fashioned by Willie to meet his customers' needs and it truly is a beautiful job.

