

## Lurgan shop has that winning formula



The butchers shop run by John and Simon Dowey in Lurgan County Armagh is a template for success but it's one that has been continually changing since established in 1936 by John R. Dowey Senior. He was succeeded by John R. Dowey Junior with his son Simon joining the business in 2007 after completing a degree in Information Technology at Coleraine University. Family run, this is a purpose built and designed shop aiming to be serving the local community for a good many years ahead.

In relocating to their current High Street site in September 1990 a delicatessen was added to the expanded butchery business. Dowey's 66ft of display cabinet boasts of nearly 1000 mouth watering products and John R reflects how variety now spices up the trade. Gone are the days of buying frozen chicken breasts and ordinary fare. Doweys provide the ultimate choice in ready prepared meals, kitchen ready dishes, cheeses and salads in addition to the most innovative new meat products.

They offer a wide range in excess of 35 different varieties of salad. All these are freshly prepared daily, in house (not bought in like competitors). They cater uniquely for everyone's taste, some sweet, some savoury, something different. They make everything themselves maintaining that is the only foolproof way of controlling both quality and margin.





Their beef is farm assured and sourced from local farmers in the green and rolling pastures of Dungannon. It is matured for at least 3 weeks and supplied through Dunbia. Pork is locally sourced from Sprotts in Portadown, Chickens from Cullybackey in Ballymena and from Richhill. They also source free range chicken from the edges of the Fermanagh Lakelands at Lough Erne.



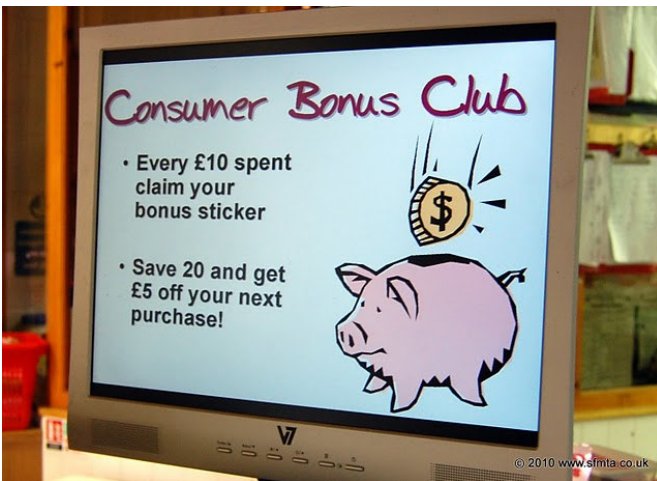
Like most successful butchers Doweys have cultivated an impressive sausage trade manufacturing all on the premises to their traditional family recipes. They always have Traditional Pork Sausage, Beef and Steak Sausages but regularly change their flavoured sausage varieties.

Several competitions have been won by their sausages including for Pork Honey Bee and Mustard, Pork and Leek and Plain Beef Sausages. They also boast a selection of gourmet sausages such as Pork and Banana or Pork and Apple.



There's always something going on at Doweys! Sometimes they have live music inside or outside the shop. Local bands treat customers to ageless music and make a grab for the sausages.

Promotional leaflets are dropped in customers bags, texting and mail shots are deployed and a Customer Bonus Card scheme encourages customer loyalty. John R Dowey was a Q Guild member before the Elite Butchers group was formed in Northern Ireland. He and Simon value the networking that this brings, the sharing, self help and free exchange of information.



The shop regularly serves over 3000 customers a week. They employ local people, are supplied by local people, local businesses taking pride serving the local community and supporting the local economy. Lurgan is 18 miles south-west of Belfast Lurgan, a town of some 23,000 inhabitants where pharmaceuticals is the major local industry.



Doweys play their part in the local business world. In Spring 2010 John Dowey was accepted as a board member of Lurgan Forward and Simon Dowey is involved in the steering group for Lurgan Chamber of Trade and Commerce.

They pride themselves with quality service to match their quality products. To ensure this never fails Doweys have employed mystery shoppers to keep them on their toes and measure them against the standards of supermarkets. Constantly trying to improve they value customers' opinion and suggestions.

It's no surprise to find that the business attracts awards with John and Simon becoming the most photographed members of their community. Judges described Doweys:- *"This butcher offers an excellent range of produce and service. The customers are treated to a fine display of excellent products served by staff that create the sort of atmosphere which makes every customer feel highly valued"*.

Craigavon Best Independent Retailer 2010, NI - Neighbourhood Retailer Butcher Shop of the Year, 2007, Bridgestone Best in Ireland Award 2007 and followed on from recognition in Rick Stein's Food Guide, by the Elite Butchers and the Q Guild Smithfield Awards.



More pictures at <http://picasaweb.google.co.uk/SFMTA1/DOWEYSLURGAN#>

In 2010 John R Dowe has made the final of the *Meat Trades Journal's* Northern Ireland Butchers Shop of the Year and John and Simon will find out in November if they have yet another title to collect.

Currently the shop is staffed by 7 full-time Butchers with an additional staff of full time Cooks and Delicatessen Sales Assistants. All members of staff receive a birthday cake on their special day and not surprisingly training is a key component in the winning formula.



Constantly adapting to customers demands in Winter 2008, John and Simon acquired the premises adjacent to the main shop and after extensive renovations opened a 50 seater Coffee Shop on the ground floor in May 2009.

Doweys aim to provide for their customers, both old and new with an exciting new eating concept with three

shops under one roof, owner driven and owner managed.

They aim to provide an emphasis on quality and value for money which isn't found in chain stores. With the attention to detail in the renovation and the menu they have developed something to appeal to everyone and provide a great eating experience.

