

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
January			168	252	223
February			296	243	288
March	880	781	1041	855	966
April	1223	977	918	1149	1005
May	1161	1098	1423	1343	1490
June	1556	1272	1475	1565	1690
July	2326	1961	1849	2255	2592
Aug	2596	2375	2726	2993	3457
Sep	1706	2114	1823	1753	1694
Oct	887	1088	1090	1111	1237
Nov	183	13	110	347	361
Dec			175	219	200
TOTAL	12518	11679	13094	14085	15203

Visitor Numbers

Visitor numbers increased by just over 1,000 in 2015, an increase of just over 7%. Fáilte Ireland have given the national rate as 9%. Assuming that Dublin will have a disproportionately high proportion of visitors, our increase looks to be on a par with the regional trend, which is our objective. We have also passed the 15,000 figure for the first time.

Visitor origin by percentage

	2011	2013	2014	2015	
Irish	22.69	25.6	24.67	23.86	
GB	18.26	16.10	17.12	13.45	
German	n/a	13.3	17.22	15.73	
French	n/a	9.09	9.68	9.63	
Spanish	n/a	8.39	6.74	6.07	
Italian	n/a	3.63	1.07	2.37	
Other Euro	n/a	5.03	3.73	5.6	
N. America	12.65	15.85	13.32	15.81	
Japanese	1.59	2.27	2.72	1.96	
Other	3.42	3.45	3.09	3.10	

The breakdown of those described as European, as a percentage of total visitors is as follows

	2013	2014	2015
German	13.3	17.22	15.73
French	9.09	9.68	9.63
Spanish	8.39	6.74	6.07
Italian	3.63	1.07	2.37
Other Eur	5.0	3.73	5.6

Visitor Survey

The visitor survey was conducted, as usual, in the last two weeks of August and the first two weeks of September. Four hundred and forty-nine responses were received; 199 English speakers, 115 German, 37 French, 36 Italian, 18 Polish, 44 Spanish. This is 34% of adult visitors for the period, a higher than usual sample.

We seem to have retrieved the situation from last year, with the number of positives increasing



the same amount as the undecided have decreased. Within language groups the breakdown is given below. Data breakdown by language can result in very small samples, though they are year-on-year comparable. As in previous years, it is the Spanish visitors who are least impressed with the Museum. Our Trip Advisor rating continues to fluctuate between 3.5 and 4 out of possible 5, a score that is consistent with our visitor survey.

1. Would you recommend the Museum to someone else?

Total Sample

%	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Yes	68	75	70	70	65	72
No	9	6	12	12	8	8
Perhaps	23	19	17	18	27	20

English Speakers

%	2014	2015
Yes	75	78
No	3	6
Perhaps	22	16

German Speakers

%	2014	2015
Yes	54	69
No	7	6
Perhaps	40	14

French Speakers

%	2014	2015
Yes	69	72
No	13	5
Perhaps	18	21



Italian Speakers

%	2014	2015
Yes	69	69
No	13	6
Perhaps	18	21

Polish Speakers

%	2014	2015
Yes	70	67
No	10	11
Perhaps	20	22

Spanish Speakers

%	2014	2015
Yes	56	50
No	27	20
Perhaps	18	29

2 How did you hear about the Museum?

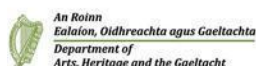
%	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Guide Book	26.67	31.25	29.1	41.3	37.19
Passing by	15.36	10.06	16.9	15.18	13.5
Leaflet at Tourist Office	14.58	15.26	13.00	8.54	12.69
Internet	7.55	13.86	13.04	11.71	12.02
Word of Mouth	10.7	11.32	11.7	11.71	11.58
Leaflet at Accommodation	11.19	12.01	5.65	10.44	7.79
Tour bus	3.38	2.00	7.82	6.96	4.23
Visitor Centre	2.27	3.23	1.3	0.95	3.11
Other	4.42	4.39	7.82	5.38	2.67

Guide books remain the most popular means of information, followed by leaflet distribution. The low influence of other visitor centres is a poor reflection on co-operative marketing.

3. Why did you visit the Butter Museum

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Curious about a Butter Museum	24	22	27	22.78	37.41
Interested in Food	20.29	22	37	20.17	35.41
In Cork to see all the sights	23	22	39	27.11	34.52
Interested in History	22.48	20	41	22.56	33.85
Told it was worth seeing	8	10	7	4.12	9.13
Other	5.43		4	3.25	7.17

As in previous surveys, there is a fairly even split between those with an interest in the subject (History, Butter & Food - 69.27%) and those just curious or "doing" Cork (71.93%).



For the 321 respondents who would recommend the Museum to another, below is the breakdown of their reported reasons for visiting the Museum. It mirrors the total body of respondents.

	Number	% of total responses
Curious about a Butter Museum	168	24
Interested in Food	159	22
In Cork to see all the sights	155	21
Interested in History	152	21
Told it was worth seeing	41	6
Other	32	5

Of those 42 respondents who would not recommend the Museum, only seven reported an interest in either history or food; 25 were just curious and/or in Cork to see the sights. The 90 who were unsure about recommending the Museum reported motivations along the lines of the entire sample, with an even split between Butter/History and Curious/In Cork.

Review

The business plan prepared at the beginning of the year as part of the Fáilte Ireland's training programme identified a number of objectives for the short and medium term for the Museum;

- 1 Visitor figures; to increase at an annual rate in line with the South West regional trends.
- 2 Exhibition Development; to animate the Museum's exhibition while maintaining incremental development of the exhibition as opportunity arises. The hope was to minimise costs in this area through the use of volunteers and an intern
- 3 Curatorial Standards; to address the deficiencies in the Museum catalogue and other curatorial matters
- 4 Marketing; to develop a marketing presence in social media and co-operative marketing with other Cork city visitor attractions; to review our website to reflect a changing focus on the animated exhibition



5 Compliance; to move towards full compliance within the regulatory framework for charities

1 **Visitor figures** As outlined above, this has been achieved.

2 **Exhibition Development**

The dismantling of the large display block in the centre of the ground floor, as described in my first report has freed up space in that area. We were unable to recruit suitable volunteers and I now believe that volunteers are not appropriate for us. We also began twice weekly milk separation and butter making demonstrations and twice weekly guided tours. We have also commissioned Jack Harrison, the exhibition designer to look at the potential for expanding the Museum into the adjacent Craft Centre Building, were space to become available there.

There was very little interest in the guided tours so I do not propose to continue them. The butter demonstrations, on the other hand, were well received. Experience has shown that milk separation is not practical, given our lack of kitchen facilities. I would hope to discontinue the milk separation but to expand the butter making. Jack Harrison's report will be available by February, it is hoped. though the possibility of additional space appears to have receded. The creation of a blueprint will, nonetheless, have been a useful exercise.

3 **Curatorial Standards**

We acquired the services of an intern, Ms Blathnaid Desmond, who was tasked with updating our catalogue and inputting it onto a MS Access database. That has been completed. We have also completed a conservation survey of the collection and costed the necessary actions. I have also enrolled on a post-graduate diploma on Heritage and Interpretation with the School of Museum Studies in the University of Leicester.



In 2016 we need to move ahead with the conservation, at the very least, arresting the current situation, and continue the proper documentation of the collection, particularly an accessions list.

4 **Marketing**

Co-operative marketing has not materialised in any substantial way. The Cork Heritage Circle has continued to meet and to produce a joint brochure, but it has been agreed that external assistance of some kind will be needed to move the project forward. An approach to Fáilte Ireland is in hand.

Social media marketing has not been persisted with. Another attempt will be made next in 2016

Conversations with our web designer has shown that an unfortunate consequence of having a very sophisticated website (shop, database, audio files) is that it is extremely expensive to reconstruct. This will need to be revisited in 2016

5 **Compliance**

As a registered charity the Museum needs to move into compliance with the Governance Code for charities. Work has begun on this with a Risk Assessment and this will continue. This will be a priority for 2016.

Other Matters.

The **Schools workbooks** are still in preparation. This is a co-operative exercise but the first phase, the finalisation of the four workbooks needs to be completed. This will be a priority for the first half of the year. Production and distribution remain a challenge but it is a high quality product.



The **Munster Institute Oral History Project** is in abeyance. The necessary job of collecting the recollections of the former students has been done but further development, such as an item on a website, awaits funding. There remain some details to be concluded with the listing of the records of the **Cork Butter Exchange** but the job is largely complete from the point of view of the commitment of my time to the project. We were able to continue to have a lecture on a dairy related matter. The lecture, in October, by **Tom Moran**, ex-Secy Genl of the Dep. of Agriculture, was on the "Era of the Quotas". The prospect of an annual lecture is attractive, but the detail will need to be revisited. Positive discussions have begun with our neighbours, **the Catholic Girl Guides**, who share our fire alarm system and the roof, to address matter of common interest.

The application to Fáilte Ireland for funding under the "**Ireland's Ancient East**" rubric was unsuccessful. This was unsurprising, as the Butter Museum is neither Ancient nor East. The process did, however, bring into focus funding issues in general.

Conclusion

This has been a positive year for the Cork Butter Museum. Visitor figures, visitor response and visitor income are all positive. Laying the foundations of a active butter making demonstration programme is essential to enhancing the visitor experience. The annual lecture, though financially challenging, has opened a new way through which the Museum can fulfill its cultural remit. The complete catalogue of the Museum's holding is a substantial achievement, as is identifying



conservation issues. The business plan has clarified an analysis of the position of the Butter Museum and a path for achieving the Museum's goals.

Peter Foynes

Dec 2015

