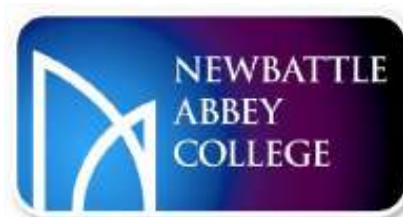


# Newbattle News

## The latest news from Scotland's life changing college



### August 2008

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Welcome to the August edition of Newbattle News.

The summer holiday period is always a good time in education to reflect on the year gone by as well as to plan for the year to come.

In April 2008 the College was reviewed by HMIe and we were delighted with the gradings awarded.

Earlier in the year we launched our new partnership with the Scottish Storytelling Centre in Edinburgh, with whom we will be delivering a new SQA-validated professional qualification in storytelling from September.

We also successfully completed the first phase of our ESOL project in partnership with St David's High School, which is supporting local families for whom English is not their first language.

We have also continued to build very positive relations with the Scottish Government, and welcomed both the Cabinet Secretary for Lifelong Learning and Education Fiona Hyslop MSP and Minister for Schools and Skills Maureen Watt MSP to the College during the summer.

Finally of course, there are our students. As ever, we are immensely proud of this year's students, all of whom are now moving on to exciting new stages in their lives. Read on for our student profile on Angela Reid who flourished during her time at Newbattle, and has a very bright future ahead of her as a result.

If you would like to find out more about Newbattle Abbey College call us on 0131 663 1921.

Have an enjoyable summer.  
Ann Southwood  
Principal, Newbattle Abbey College



### **Tales of a pioneering qualification**

Together with the Scottish Storytelling Centre, we are pleased to offer the first ever professional qualification in storytelling skills. The new qualification, which will be accredited by the Scottish Qualifications Authority, will be available at Newbattle from September this year.

Scotland has a rich and ancient tradition of oral storytelling, and the art-form has undergone a revival in recent years. There are currently around 110 professional storytellers living and working in Scotland, and there are many more professionals that use aspects of storytelling in their day to day work.

Our Depute Principal Norah Fitzcharles, has been working closely with the Scottish Storytelling Centre to establish the new qualification. She said: "We are very excited about working with the Storytelling Centre. The new qualification will offer learners a truly unique qualification, which will give them a fantastic set of skills to enhance their particular areas of professional practice, as well as helping to support the revival of one of Scotland's proudest traditions."

For more information on the Scottish Storytelling Centre go to <http://www.scottishstorytellingcentre.co.uk/index.asp>.

## ESOL launch

Throughout the last year, we have been working hard to put our ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) grant from the Scottish Funding Council to good use.

In April we launched our 'ESOL family learning' project: a partnership with St David's High School in Dalkeith to create the first online ESOL course for members of the local Polish community using a blended learning approach. The aim of the ten-week ESOL course is to help cater for the language needs of the parents of the growing number of Polish pupils at St David's High School. Parents taking the course are coached in the use of IT by senior pupils at the school, while Polish pupils act as translators for their families and other members of the Polish community.



To celebrate the launch, we hosted a special event beginning with Cardinal Keith O'Brien conducting a Mass for the Polish community in the College chapel, followed by an evening of Scottish and Polish culture, attended by special guests including the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning, Fiona Hyslop MSP; Rhona Brankin MSP; staff and pupils from St David's High School in Dalkeith as well as staff and students from Newbattle Abbey College. Music in the chapel was facilitated by St David's High School Head of Music Philip Thorne MBE; music teacher Brian McNally and S1 pupil Rebecca Weatherhead. Guests dined on both Scottish and Polish food prepared by St David's pupils, and danced the night away at a ceilidh in the College crypt. Music was provided by a Scottish ceilidh band featuring staff from the school and Scottish and Polish bag pipers, the latter of whom flew into Scotland especially for the event.

The evening was an astounding success!

## Maureen Watt MSP Visit

In June the Minister for Schools and Skills, Maureen Watt MSP, visited the College to meet with our Principal Ann Southwood and our Depute Principal Norah Fitzcharles to discuss the unique learning opportunities available at the college and its plans for the future.



The Minister received a tour of the college, spoke to students and also learned more about the college's 'Coaching for Excellence' project and the college's partnership with St David's High School.

Maureen Watt MSP said: "The collaborative project between Newbattle Abbey and St David's High School is a good example of joined up working and family learning that the Scottish Government is keen to promote."



**Heritage lottery**

## funding grant

We are pleased to announce a Project Planning Grant of £48,600 from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to help us maintain and protect Newbattle's historically significant buildings and landscape.

The Project Planning Grant will enable expert detailed assessments to be carried out on the current condition of the building.

The college continues to develop opportunities for the public to visit and explore its buildings and grounds. Visitors can now stay overnight at Newbattle Abbey's B&B or host christening ceremonies in the college chapel. The font used for the christenings in the small private chapel is understood to have been used to baptise Mary Queen of Scots at Linlithgow Palace. If you would like to book a stay or a host a christening ceremony, please contact [office@newbattleabbeycollege.ac.uk](mailto:office@newbattleabbeycollege.ac.uk) or telephone 0131 663 1921.

The funding from the HLF will help preserve such facilities and in turn aid our ongoing development. The project's management is to be carried out by the Alba Conservation Trust.

## Visitors receive lessons in history

Visitors to Newbattle Abbey College can now learn about the building's fascinating and exciting history, by taking a guided tour of the 16th century house.



Volunteer tour guides, who receive training in Newbattle Abbey's extensive history, take guests on a journey dating back to the 12th century when the building was the site of a Cistercian Abbey occupied by monks, through to the present day, providing an insight into how Newbattle Abbey came to be Scotland's only adult education residential college. The college building, which was bequeathed to the people of Scotland by the 11th Marquis of Lothian, is home to many interesting historical artefacts including a water organ which was brought to the house in 1822 to mark the visit of King George IV.

Rae McGhee, Heritage Development Officer at Newbattle Abbey College, said: "The tour helps to make the visitors experience at Newbattle Abbey more enjoyable and memorable, and is not all about dates and historical facts, but is a fascinating journey where the past is brought to life."

To book a tour of Scotland's hidden gem, please call Rae on 0131 663 1921 or email [raem@newbattleabbeycollege.ac.uk](mailto:raem@newbattleabbeycollege.ac.uk).

## Newbattle student receives prestigious scholarship

Newbattle student Angela Reid from Lauder is one of only 12 students in the UK to receive the prestigious Helena Kennedy Foundation Scholarship this year. The Helena Kennedy Foundation awards scholarships of £1000 on an annual basis to students who have overcome significant barriers to continue with their education.



Angela, who previously helped run after-school clubs with her local council, decided to enrol at Newbattle as a route to university after leaving school with no qualifications.

Speaking of her award, Angela said: "I am absolutely delighted. I have always wanted to go to university and Newbattle was the way for me to get there. I had just come out of a bad relationship and saw the perfect time to enrol at Newbattle. The course was difficult but the tutors were incredibly

supportive. Newbattle is an absolutely brilliant place; I loved the whole experience and I feel that it has changed my life and allowed me to get to where I want to be."

Angela will be awarded her scholarship at a ceremony in the House of Lords in January, and will use her award to help fund a Social Policy and Politics degree at Edinburgh University. After university, Angela hopes to become a political researcher.

## Summer students arrival

For the past five years Newbattle has hosted summer school students from countries such as Russia, Spain, Italy, Japan and Greece.

Students spend 2-4 weeks at Newbattle studying English, focusing in particular on pronunciation and conversation. Classes, normally comprising of 12 students, are taught by qualified mother tongue English teachers with a minimum of 3 years experience and last 3 hours per day.

The rest of the day is spent sampling all that Newbattle and Edinburgh have to offer including Newbattle guided tours and visits to Edinburgh Castle.

Principal Ann Southwood said: "Summer students seem to really enjoy their time spent at Newbattle. We are very happy to offer our facilities for the summer period to help such a productive programme."

The summer programme started in June with an overall intake of approximately 500 students.

## Recruitment for 2008/2009

We have reached that time again, a new academic year is just around the corner. Applications for the 2008/2009 session to study for the Newbattle Abbey College Arts and Humanities Award are still being received. For an application pack or any other information, please contact [office@newbattleabbeycollege.ac.uk](mailto:office@newbattleabbeycollege.ac.uk) or telephone 0131 663 1921.

The Awards Ceremony for our 2007/2008 students will be held on 6 September 2008.

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