

Wood you believe it? Bridge wins award!

NEWBATTLE Abbey College's grotto bridge has beaten off competition from all over the UK to win a prize at the 2010 Wood Awards.

Newbattle Abbey College and Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) entered an agreement in 2009 to replace the 16th century building's existing grotto bridge, which was installed in the 1940s by the Army and in recent years deemed too costly to repair.

The structure, designed by Forestry Civil Engineering and constructed by JKF, was deemed the "Best Use of British Timber" at this year's Wood Awards – the UK's premier prize ceremony for wood in buildings and furniture.

The new bridge was built from air-dried, pressure-treated Scottish Larch to give maximum durability and sustainability and was praised by the Wood Awards' judges for its structural innovation. The bridge links Newbattle – Scotland's only adult residential college – with the neighbouring historic Lord Ancrum's Wood.

College principal Ann Southwood said: "We were delighted with the support we received from Forestry Commission Scotland for the bridge. It perfectly complements the college's building and grounds and we are sure it will retain its charm for many years to come."

Dr Geoff Freedman, Forestry Commission Civil Engineer, said: "The bridge is a shining example of just how fantastic and versatile home-grown timber is and how it can be used to blend in with its surroundings."

