**John Wheatley College - Learner Engagement Practice**

This academic year has seen the Students’ Association of John Wheatley College transform its level of activity from an organisation with very few people involved or even aware of its existence into a powerful agent for student engagement with both the College and the communities it serves. The Association conducted an active community-based campaign as part of the NUS ‘Our Future Our Fight’ campaign which actively opposed Scottish Government cuts to funding for students and further education colleges.

With College staff, the Students’ Association identified the key players in the local communities (Elected Members and community activists in east of Glasgow) served by John Wheatley College and engaged them in the campaign through email, phone calls and visits to connected partner learning centres. This communication (particularly the visits) was conducted by class representatives and members of the Executive Committee working with trade unions to support a community-based petition which gathered a significant number of signatures. This exercise included engagement with local press, local businesses and people by canvassing signatures at the local shopping centre. The pinnacle of the campaign was achieved by the organising of a Q & A event which afforded the opportunity for campus-based college students, community-based students, the Students’ Association, local community representatives, staff trade union representatives and local elected members to address the issues arising from the NUS Our Future Our Fight campaign. Chaired by the Student President, the format of the session was to pose questions to a panel made up of Members of the Scottish Parliament and the Cabinet Secretary for Education for Lifelong Learning.

The campaign has encouraged wider engagement between campus and community-based students, helping community based learners identify more closely with the College and its aims. In addition, the local community now clearly recognises the potential impact and threat of educational cuts on their personal lives. The Student Association’s campaign has helped to rally local residents and create positive community engagement.