

# NORTHUMBRIA BLOOD BIKES

**Members' Newsletter: December 2013**



**December 12<sup>th</sup> 2013 :** After what seemed like an eternity, we finally presented two fully liveried blood bikes, with equipment racks for blood boxes, side by side at the open meeting (The Wheatsheaf, Woolsington).

## Welcome!

Welcome once again to our monthly newsletter, a shorter one this time as the team have been busy with the quarterly open meeting which took place on 12<sup>th</sup> December. More detailed information will be on the forum... please take a look if you would like a more comprehensive view of our activity!

## News from the open meeting:

We've had some very positive feedback from the meeting (attended by around 30 people, including three new members). Each committee member updated on their areas of responsibility, with both news of recent events and plans & actions for the foreseeable future.

- NHS Liaison - Progress with hospital trusts ( status with each trust )
- Membership - Number of members, fees, records, renewal etc
- Finance - income & expenditure to date, key aims for end of financial year
- Fundraising - Donations, activities in the last quarter and events arranged for 2014
- Bike Management - Our new bike, plans for expansion
- Rota - developments with Controller roles, Bloodrun service, Call care, monthly meetings.
- Training - Blue light, slow riding & familiarisation updates, dates for next sessions.
- IT/Web - new hosting of website, planned additions & changes to site format etc
- Publicity - Plans for major press release on start of service, Prescott Bike Festival
- Secretary - changes in activity to comply with constitution, documentation plans etc
- Members issues - Open discussion to address queries submitted from members.

## Both bikes racked and ready....

The pressure was on to try to get the blood bikes ready in time for the open meeting; In fact the livery was fitted to the Pan less than 24 hours earlier! - Most of the people attending knew that we were aiming to present the two bikes together, but it was an extra surprise that both had been fitted with the bloodbox racks. All we need now is blue lights on bike number two ...and they're on order. The Pan has been named "Octagon" by MG Northumbria, whose kind donation allowed us to purchase the bike. We're still looking for a name for the BMW, which has lost its centre pannier ("the police bump") to accommodate a custom-made lower rack; the weight of a fully-laden blood box is enough to present handling problems if we fitted it above the centre pannier. The new rack is designed to maintain a lower centre of gravity, without restricting the opening of the side panniers.



## Call Care pilot trial unanimous

The November newsletter discussed a visit by some of the group to "Call Care", a monitoring company who, for a fee, would manage the handling of NHS blood requests, and co-ordinate the rider logistics for us. The visit to their control room went ahead and left a very good impression on those who attended. Details of how the system works were presented at the open meeting, together with likely costs, advantages & drawbacks, and a unanimous decision was made to go ahead with a pilot scheme to test its effectiveness. It would seem that the Call Care group are well equipped, well experienced and very professional in their handling of operations; a blood bike call came in from the NHS during the visit (for Bloodrun EVS), and it was evident that from a safety perspective the group are a sensible option to consider. A pilot scheme will be arranged to coincide with either our own service launch or, if enough demand warrants it, another support trial between ourselves and Bloodrun EVS.

## Jackets due for delivery in next few weeks



The rider jackets have been delayed but are due to be delivered in the very near future. When they do, we are going to try to get a nice group photo of as many members as possible, with the two bikes. This is to use in future press releases (primarily the launch of our own service), and also in our own literature: pull up banners, leaflets etc. Don't forget you can already buy embroidered jackets (right), shirts & polo shirts from us.... Important if you are planning on joining us at one of our fundraising events; more details of which are on the next page!



## So what's been happening in the last four weeks, then?



Plenty! Firstly, a huge "Thank you" to the staff at Scania in Washington and Darlington who raised a whopping £850.00 for Northumbria Blood Bikes through sponsored cycling events. Pictured far left are John Parish and Peter Robertson, who took the 1200RT along to the Washington branch of Scania for the cheque presentation by Alan Dale, and (near left image) some of the staff who took part in the fundraising. We also attended the

Lanchester Centurions Christmas event on 7<sup>th</sup> December for awareness, fundraising and hopefully the recruitment of a few new members. We had a fundraising day at Sainsburys, Durham (which broke all our records for supermarket fundraisers!), and a charity awareness event at Tesco Sunderland, where we made a very good impression and have been invited to return...with bikes... for another in-store event! The pupils of Seaton Delaval First School who had a visit last month, have held a non-uniform day to raise money for us. All-in-all, a pretty good month for fundraising!



## ...You'll be burning our fuel? ...Let's see you earning our fuel!

So we now have two bikes, which means twice as much in insurance, tax, maintenance charges & fuel. We'd like to see as many members as possible play their part in helping to fund the regular expenses, and while we appreciate that there are always other commitments that may prevent you from attending, it would be great to see a few more volunteers helping to put money into the bank..... it makes you feel so much more justified when you're on duty to know that you've added to our resources instead of just drawing from them! The coming months will offer plenty of opportunity to contribute by putting something back...

### Friday 27<sup>th</sup> December 10:00am-2:00pm - Bag Packing at Sainsbury's, Arnison Centre, Durham.



We need to provide enough volunteers to bag pack at TEN till points. Hopefully an opportunity to tell customers what we do, how it saves the NHS money, how professional we are, and fill our buckets with donations. Remember, it's only for four hours, and it's the supermarket which has to date provided the best results for fundraising..... The 27<sup>th</sup> is just after Boxing Day so the store should be crammed full of shoppers, and we have TEN TIMES more presence than last time!

### More dates for your diary:

**Friday & Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> February: Tesco, Kingston Park**

**Friday & Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> N& 22<sup>nd</sup> February: Tesco, Gateshead**

Okay, maybe a long way off at the moment, but please mark them on your shiny new 2014 calendar, especially if you have not attended any events to date. It's good banter & good fun!



### New: fundraising calendar.

There's regular changes to the calendar as new opportunities come in, so please check the calendar regularly for updates. We'll also try to publicise new events on social networks too. Here's the link:

<http://teamup.com/ksdf1389336ea6ea40/>

You can get the link from the fundraising section of the forum: "Board Index > General > Fundraising."



You can also contribute by signing up with [easyfundraising.org.uk](http://easyfundraising.org.uk), a free way to raise money for our cause when shopping online. Our charity is already on there, just search for Northumbria Blood Bikes when you sign up.

### The end of an era....

It is with regret that we are having to wave farewell to the Wheatsheaf, Woolsington, as the venue for our monthly committee meetings, quarterly open meetings and blue light training. Unfortunately they are planning to redesign the pub to facilitate a soft play area, and pretty soon there'll be kids bouncing



up and down just like Gary our rota manager did when he heard we were buying a Pan European. Negotiations are already underway to arrange a couple of new locations for meetings, and updates will be posted to the forum, and in future newsletters, as soon as we have them. We'd like to take the opportunity to thank the management & staff of the Wheatsheaf for their hospitality over the last fourteen months and wish them every success with their redevelopment plans.

## And finally...

Can we also take this opportunity to thank each & every one of you for your enthusiasm and commitment over the last fifteen months. This is our second Christmas as Northumbria Blood Bikes, and we should be very proud of what we've achieved having started with... absolutely nothing. We now have nearly a hundred members & volunteers, two dedicated bikes, racked, liveried, taxed and tested. We have a formidable presence at awareness events with banners, leaflets, video presentations, a gazebo, 9ft high flags, pull-up banners, mini motos.... We have training in place, uniforms and ID cards, the support of Durham Police motorcycle section and most of all, the trust, support and belief in us from the health trusts that we aim to serve. Where will we be this time next year? I for one can hardly wait to see. Thanks to all of you for making us what we are.

Have a great Christmas and a happy new year, from everyone on the Northumbria Blood Bikes team.



**FUNDRAISING HOTLINE: 07766 479 770** - for any opportunities to increase our funding through sponsorship, locations for collecting tins, supermarket events etc...



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