

NORTHUMBRIA BLOOD BIKES

Newsletter: January 2014



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

- A year which will hopefully see us starting a full operation in the region, and a substantial increase to the fleet (we're looking for bike number three already), as well as a big increase in public awareness through our various events and fundraising efforts.



Last month gave us our first ever bag-packing opportunity at Sainsburys, Arnison Centre, Durham (pictured left) which provided a fantastic boost to our funds. Thank you to everyone who took time out from family celebrations on 27th December to take part in this; the atmosphere was brilliant and we raised a lot of money, but we also raised the profile of our group and demonstrated to the store how professional we are, which helps us to gain future opportunities from them.

A new meeting place at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Gateshead:

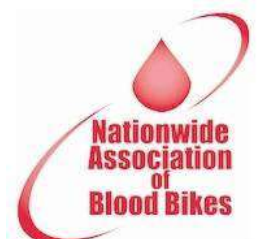
Thanks to Rota Manager Gary for organising an excellent venue for coffee evenings at the QE hospital. The first one, on 2nd January, went very well with an exceptional turnout. Riders can use the restaurant when on shift during the night as they will be classed as staff, and can take advantage of the coffee at staff discount rates. The doors are locked after 7pm and you can only gain entry by using the intercom, but Gary will make enquiries about the entry codes to the main building before we go live, and update us all as soon as he has the info. Many of those attending also took part in a quick tour of the drop-off location (Pathology department) which is where we will deliver once we start a service in Gateshead. Thanks also to hospital security who provided free parking to us for the evening! Gary is currently planning similar events at other hospitals so we can learn the collection locations.

Planning for 2014s events....

The new year brings plenty of opportunities for promoting ourselves, and preparations are already well under way for several big events in the summer. Last year we attended the Town Moor exhibition (previously the Hoppings) and we plan to do so again this year. There's the Prescott Bike Festival in April,



The County Show (Stocksfield), Bikewise (Durham), and of course we can't forget the Great North Run which gave us some impressive exposure last year with our bike in pole position at the start of the race. Madathlon have several exhaustive physical challenges planned for the year with the aim of getting us a bike, so we will be doing our best to support their activities whenever we can. Other possibilities include Sunderland Airshow, Alnwick Gardens, The Herrington Country Park Fair, Motorcycle Live.....the list seems endless! All of these require applications and planning well in to check the feasibility and practicality of attending them. Graham Moor (Fundraising) and Owain Harris (Publicity) are already working behind the scenes to make sure we get the appropriate permissions to present ourselves at events like these, even though they may seem to be a long way off.



Committee meeting moves to ASDA



January saw our first committee meeting away from the Wheatsheaf. On this occasion we used a community room in Asda, Boldon, but the plan is to use similar rooms in other supermarkets over a range of locations. (This picture is deliberately small so you can't see the amount of chocolate we're scoffing).

Fundraising activity this month:

Christmas didn't stop the fundraising activity and another busy month brought some stunning results. We were one of three nominated charities in the green token scheme at Waitrose, Ponteland during the last couple of months of 2013, and we achieved 50% of the tokens, netting us a cheque for £500.00. We collected a "pretty full" collecting tin from the Elemental Tattoo shop in Alnwick. Just two days after our last newsletter was released, we received a Lloyds Bank community fund award of £300.00 (Award pictured right, with a lovely reflection of Owain!)



American Express (Newcastle office) nominated us as their "Charity of the Half Year"....thanks to some keen promotional activity from Richard Scholfield. We received a cheque from them for £800. Chris Ryan, our former Treasurer, sadly lost his stepfather a couple of days before Christmas. The family asked if they could have a collection tin to leave out during the service which followed his passing, and has kindly offered a substantial donation as a result. There is a request as to how the donation is used; we're busy putting together a proposal which honours the request appropriately.

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



Our next fundraising event is a bag-packing day at ASDA, Gosforth on Saturday 18th January. This is only our second ever bag-pack, and the first for any ASDA store. We're keen to see as many volunteers helping as possible.... It's a chance to make a big addition to our funding, and with the first regular service in our region being finalised with the NHS now, we need to raise money quickly! Please offer your support if you can. Details are on our forum under "Fundraising", but if for any reason you can't access it,, email fundraising@northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk, and Graham will let you know how you can help.

Additional Dates for the diary: 7th & 8th February - Tesco, Kingston Park (Bag Packing) 21st/22nd February - Tesco Trinity Square, Gateshead (Bag Packing). Sunday 6th April - Prescott Bike Festival.

You may think we tend to go on & on about the importance of fundraising, and deservedly so...we do!! However, we also fully understand that everyone has lives and commitments of their own to cope with. Please don't feel that you will be looked upon in a negative light if you are unable to fundraise..... we understand that circumstances differ for each and every member, and we won't think badly of you if you are unable to attend. We do still need to promote fundraising and encourage attendance as much as possible in order to survive as a viable organisation, and will always be asking for volunteers to help. But if circumstances dictate that you are unable to attend, we won't think any less of you, so please don't feel pressured! Perhaps if you feel this describes YOU, you might be interested in easy fundraising below....which costs nothing, and benefits us each time you shop online. We're already seeing good results from this, so spread the word!



You can also contribute by signing up with 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. A full explanation of how it works is on the site.

THREE appearances in local media within 8 days...



We were lucky enough to get two articles over the Christmas period in our local newspapers.... Pictured above left is the first one on Christmas Eve in the Sunderland Echo, featuring Owain Harris and John Parish with Detective Chief Supt Alan Veitch of Northumbria Police. They provided a Sat Nav for our 1200RT, and Owain arranged the photoshoot. The same picture was also used on Northumbria Police's website on New Years Eve (right), and before we had time to put away the Christmas tree, another one popped up in the Evening Chronicle (above right), on Jan 1st.



A Blood Box on its way for events...

One of these blood boxes has been ordered to use for video & posters/leaflets, and to take to events as an additional "prop". It's important that people can see what it is that we are carrying....highlighted last month when a photographer asked for a photo of the blood box "with the cover off" which of course we couldn't do as it was only a mock-up! It will be particularly good to explain things to younger kids so they grasp what we do. This is not the type of box we will be using on real journeys; they cost a cool £500.00 each, but at least we have *something* we can show people at future events!



Jackets have arrived: Time for a Photo-opportunity!



35 Jackets have arrived (almost identical to the ones pictured here), so it's time for us to arrange a group photograph to use for media & publicity. Weather permitting, we aim to meet at the Angel Of The North at 10:00am on Sunday 2nd February. Check on our forum for more information.

No Easter Egg Run this year, but business as usual for Bikewise.



Most of you will probably have heard already, but this years Easter Egg Run has been cancelled. A decision was made to reduce staffing of the Cleveland and Durham Specialist Operation Unit (Durham motorcycle Police) by five officers, leaving just one Sergeant and eight constables split between Spennymoor and Wynyard. Sadly the Easter Egg Run is one of the victims of this reduction in resources. "On behalf of my team I would like to thank you for all your support and generosity at Easter Egg Runs in the past. Over the years we have delivered hundreds of your donated eggs, you have raised thousands of pounds in support of

The Meningitis Research Foundation and have acted as positive ambassadors for motorcycling more generally" - Sergeant Ian Rodgers. Bikewise, however, will still go ahead on Sunday 20th July 2014; but it will be the last Bikewise event at Durham Force Headquarters before it gets demolished in favour of their new offices. It's too early to say if Bikewise will continue into 2015; the new site does not have adequate space to stage the event and Durham Police have not found an alternative yet. Northumbria Blood Bikes will be present, as we were last year.

January & February are busy months: Hopefully in our next newsletter we might be announcing the start of a blood running service in our region, or the purchase of another bike....who knows! We'll just have to wait and see what the weeks ahead will offer us. - Take care & ride safe!

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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