



NORTHUMBRIA BLOOD BIKES

September
2014
Newsletter



- And then there were SIX !

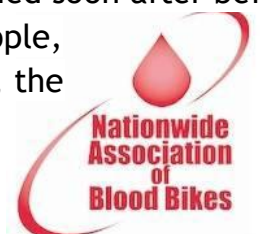
For the first time, our entire fleet of six bikes together!



The official handover of two brand new Triumph Trophy motorcycles on 24th Aug at the Cobblers Hall Pub in Newton Aycliffe, bringing our fleet up to SIX bikes.....

The motorbikes were donated by MADATHLON, a charity who raises funds for life-saving equipment by performing physically demanding challenges including swimming, cycling, mountain climbing, running & hiking. Madathlon have spent the last year holding many events and challenges to raise enough money to give us two bikes, Named "Claire" and "Bella", and will soon be seeking another good cause to support in 2015. We aim to provide as much support as we can for them in the months ahead in recognition of the incredible contribution they've made to our group.

Madathlon was formed to honour the memory of Claire Gardiner, a biker who died soon after being diagnosed with a brain tumour. She donated four of her vital organs to four people, all of them went on to live a better life thanks to Claire's donation. Since then, the charity has purchased life-saving equipment for James Cook University Hospital and then chose Northumbria Blood Bikes for their 2014 campaign.





Front row; MADATHLON's organisers Rob Shields and Edd Gardiner in front of "Claire" & "Bella", the blood bikes funded by the work of their determined volunteers!

Madathlon
2014

There ain't no party like a MADATHLON party!

24th August was an amazing day, with a photoshoot for the Northern Echo, the formal presentation of our brand new bikes "Claire" and "Bella", and the maddest of after-parties in the Cobblers Hall pub. Many volunteers attended, and contributed to Madathlon through raffle tickets which Gayle and friends were selling to the pub-goers. While only a few people managed to stay for the evening, there was plenty going on which you may have missed! Several people bravely chose to shave their heads in order to raise additional funds.... Including Matthew Gardiner (below), who, for his troubles, got an



"H" sprayed onto his newly shaven head (for 'Helicopter pad'!) Gayle, who had been selling raffle tickets all afternoon, did the honours of removing Matthews hair with a very dodgy rechargeable shaver, which was clearly about to run out of charge!

Later, the focus moved to the other end of the pub where one of the bikes was displayed in all it's splendour. The raffle was drawn alongside the bike while Richard Scholfield and Alan Ross looked on. Sadly, not even they managed to stay till the very end of the night! And when the part finally ended, Madathlon had managed to raise an incredible £1641.00!

-Brilliant party, amazing people, and a fantastic day..... Thank you, Madathlon !!!

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Asda Living event, Durham:

Saturday 23rd August was our first event at the ASDA Living store at the Arnison Centre, Framwellgate Moor in Durham. The event was perfectly timed to promote our involvement in the "Green Token Scheme" campaign running at the store throughout the month. ASDA's community champion (Adam, pictured) was keen for us to have a go on the store microphone to tell shoppers about our work, so Alan Ross and Peter Robertson both did an impromptu interview which was aired across the store PA system. This seemed to have a very positive effect as many of the store customers came over and made donations into our buckets!

Thank you to the volunteers who assisted us with fundraising & spreading the word at the event. Hopefully we'll be back there soon!



NBB at Elsdon Village Fete:

Less than 24 hours after we were officially presented with our two new Trophy bikes from Madathlon, we had one of them on duty at a promotional event. Elsdon Village (Halfway between Otterburn and Rothbury) chose Bank Holiday Monday for their annual fete, and "Bella" was there to teach the visitors all about our bloodbike group. We fitted in nicely with some of the other guests: Northumbria Police Neighbourhood Policing Team were there, along with a fire engine for the kids to climb on. Thankfully the weather stayed fair, so we didn't have to spend hours washing mud off the bike afterwards!!

Tesco Extra, Consett:

Saturday 30th August was our first ever appearance at the Tesco Extra store in Consett. Owain & Susan Harris, Alan Ross and Jerry Trowbridge were in their foyer from 9:30am until just after four, and were lucky enough to be joined by the south rota duty rider, John Parish. This meant that we had two bikes in the foyer, giving us a much bigger display for the customers. The staff were lovely, and even gave us an access card for their staff canteen, so we had discounted tea, coffee & food while we worked. Lovely Jubbly! By the end of the day

we had two fairly full collecting buckets, two new member / rider enquiries to follow up, and plenty of photos. Tesco's Community Champion, Kirsty Lawrence, even provided us with the Facebook & Twitter links for their store so we could promote ourselves there, too! Thanks as always to all our volunteers who spared some of their time to make the event a success....it's really appreciated!



For the second year running, Northumbria Blood Bikes take prime position in the Great North Run, This time with our new Madathlon bike "Claire"



Thanks to the continued efforts of Owain Harris (publicity), we were able to get a blood bike positioned ahead of the lead vehicle in one of the North East's most prestigious annual events.... and as a mark of respect to the Madathlon charity who have helped us so much this year, we made sure the bike we used was "Claire"...

Bupa great north run



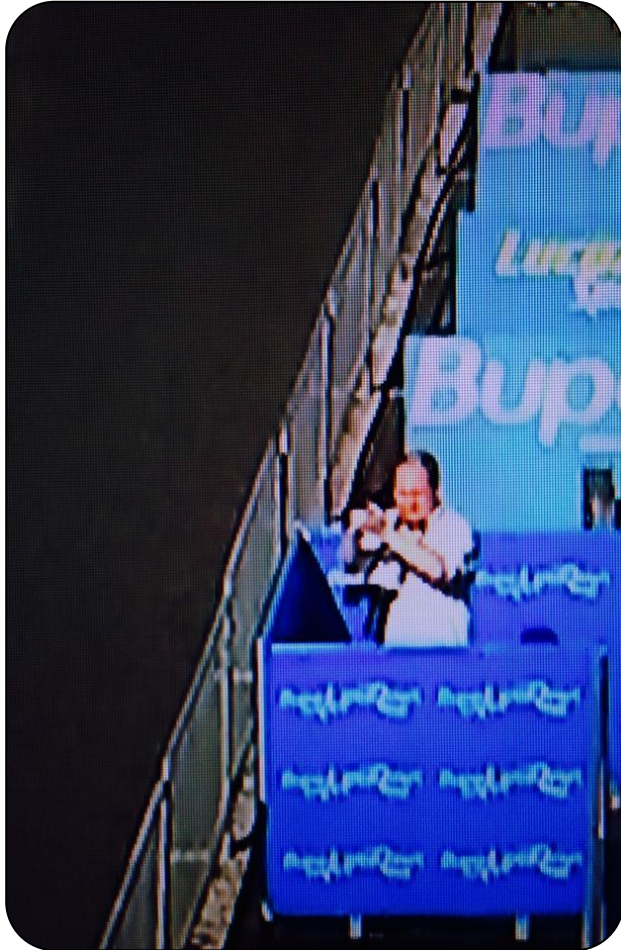
Congratulations, and a big "THANK YOU" to all the people who took part in the Great North Run this year;

We're so glad to have such determined volunteers to support our cause....

- Hope you didn't suffer too many aches & pains the next morning!

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Bupa great north run



Above: Barry Bullas was on the evening highlights programme on television, snapping the runners and cheering them on from the podium in the central reservation - talk about pole position!!

Below: Andrew & Angela Wilkinson, two of the many competitors who raised money for Northumbria Blood Bikes...



As seen on tv.....

Our membership secretary, Barry Bullas, was at the start line nice and early to get some photographs of our riders before the race, and as a result managed to secure one of the best possible locations to take photographs. He was on television (left) as the Royal Marines started their run with the "Million" flag, and he produced some great shots of our blood bike, and the elite runners.

Our chairman Peter also had his moment on the TV at the end of the course; he was standing in the background while Denise Lewis was doing a piece to camera - but to recognise it's him you have to recognise first, his stomach and secondly, his chin - not perhaps his best features!!



How much did we raise?

Well, the money is still coming in, but our early estimates suggest that we've raised something in the region of **£2,400!**

We owe a massive debt of gratitude to all those who endured the half marathon for us, including Angela Wilkinson, Andrew Wilkinson, Claire Fugill, Sam Fugill, Megan Campbell, Mike Thompson, Gemma Parish, Neil Defty (Who ran on behalf of Madathlon), and I'm sure we've missed some out.... Apologies if we have... More photos are on our Facebook and Twitter....

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Benfield Nissan (Gateshead):

Do you remember our event at Benfield Nissan's open day? This month we were delighted to get a call from them to donate this cheque for £400.00, raised from their "Be More" Charity day. Michele Swaddle (left), Paul Mulligan and Nathan Smith from the dealership presented the cheque to our Fundraising Manager Graham Moor on Monday 1st September, and we were happy to see that we featured on their Facebook page, too!

Durham Market Square:

The second event on the same day; Mark Tanner and colleagues popped the gazebo up in Durham Market Square for a fundraising & awareness event. Fortunately it stayed dry for a change, and thankfully less windy than the previous time the gazebo was used (Gosforth Park, where a gust of wind snapped two of the metal crossbars!) If any other members out there can help at one of these events, we always need volunteers: email: fundraising@northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk



Wansbeck Rotarians donation: 1st Sep

A third event, still on the first of September, was a visit to Newbiggin Golf Club, where Mike Thompson and Owain Harris gave a presentation to the Wansbeck Rotarians. "Bright Northumbria", one of our liveried Yamaha FJR bikes, was on hand for photo-opportunities. The Rotarians also made a donation to our charity for which we are very grateful.

Gateshead Rotarians donation: 4th Sep

Owain Harris (Publicity) has been extremely busy this month... especially as he spent the last part of August riding a Harley Davidson across the United States!

On 4th September, hot on the heels of his presentation to Wansbeck Rotarians, he gave another to the Gateshead Rotarians at The Ravensworth Arms public house in Lamesley. There were a lot of 'professional people' at this one, Doctors, Lawyers, Solicitors, ex-Police Chief Inspectors, Undertakers, etc. They had seen some of the bikes on the streets, but as so many people do, they assumed they were NHS or BTS staff. The talk went well and afterwards they presented Owain with a cheque for £100.00 which will be forwarded to the treasurer in due course. Thank you, Gateshead Rotarians!



Remember Cramlington Ladies Group?

Cast your mind back to our July newsletter, and you may recall a feature about a presentation that John Parish and Owain Harris attended for the "Healthwise" Ladies Group in Cramlington. The event made it to the Evening Chronicle, which was great publicity...

Well..... Owain returned from his annual holiday to find an Email from the Group:

"Dear Owain,

I am delighted to tell you that, upon our recommendation, The Asda Store, Cramlington has selected Northumbria Blood Bikes as one of their preferred charities. This starts from 31st August 2014"

- Wonderful news, which only helps to illustrate the importance of these smaller events, talks and bike visits. They can help us to gain additional opportunities for fundraising and publicity that we would never imagine!



Donation in honour of Scott Soulsby.....

We always appreciate donations from the public, but sadly it's all too often that we receive them under the most upsetting of circumstances. Such was the case when we were contacted by friends and family of Scott Soulsby, who died when his Kawasaki motorbike crashed with a van on the B6309 between Ebchester and Stocksfield on 24th August.

Scott, 31, lived in Dipton, County Durham with his wife Mandy and two young children. He knew about Northumbria Blood Bikes and had already told his family of his intentions to join our group. Mandy asked people to make donations to Northumbria Blood Bikes on Scott's behalf instead of floral tributes at the funeral. Paying tribute to her husband, Mandy said: "Scott was a very well loved man and he touched a lot of people's lives. He loved his motorbikes and going out for rides

with his best friend. He loved our children dearly and took great pride in the people they are developing into."

We were also approached by John Wardle, whose T.A.G.S. (South Moor) golf colleagues also wanted to contribute in Scott's name. "We were going to send flowers, but our members insisted we send money to yourselves as opposed to flowers. Your work is so much more important". We'd like to thank Vanessa Smith and John Wardle for contacting us to make donations in memory of Scott, and to Scott's father, Ian, for allowing us to include this article in our newsletter. Our thoughts are with you all.



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NBB in SEVEN local newspapers this month...

The handover of "Bright Northumbria", funded by a £5000 donation from Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, generated articles in five of the local newspapers this month.

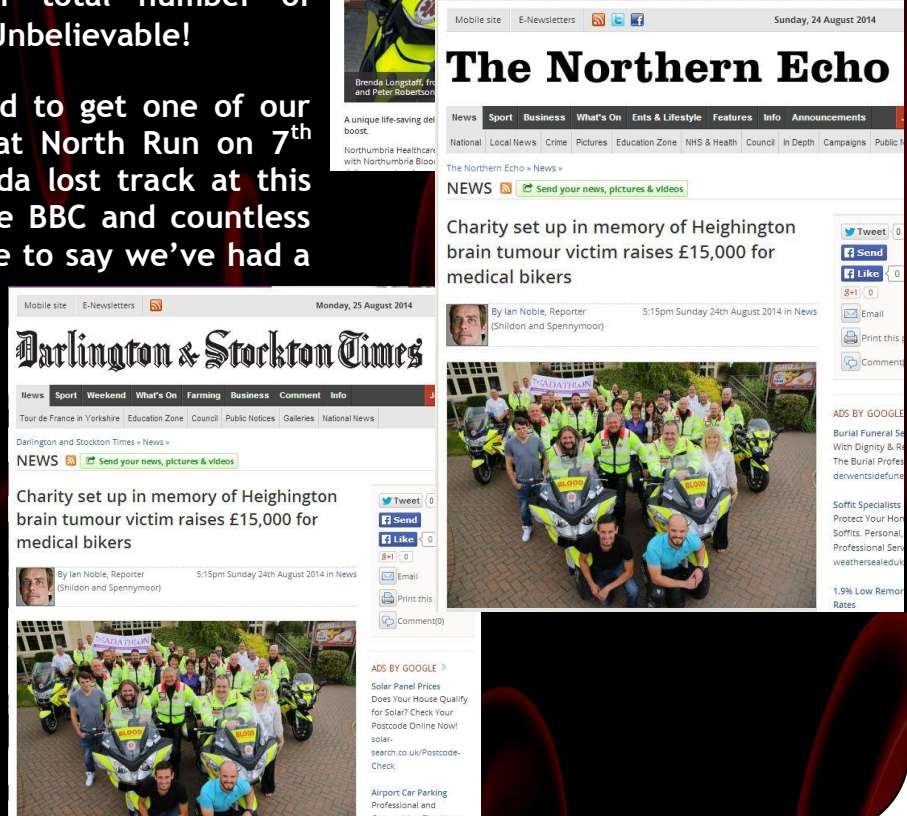
First was the Journal (9th Aug), followed by the News Post Leader two days later (11th Aug). Then the Northumberland Gazette (15th), The News Guardian (18th) and Morpeth Herald (20th). Yes, the similarity in these articles may suggest that they are all from the newsroom of the same "Parent" newspaper, but who cares! This kind of publicity is fantastic!



Then of course there was the MADATHLON article in the Northern Echo (which believe it or not was on their website before the event had even finished!) on 25th. This was followed by a feature in the Darlington & Stockton Times (26th), bringing our total number of features to SEVEN in just one month! Unbelievable!

Not content to stop at seven, we had to get one of our bikes onto the start line of the Great North Run on 7th September too.... And I think we kinda lost track at this stage, what with live coverage on the BBC and countless articles on all of the local papers. Safe to say we've had a "pretty good month" publicity-wise!

As it's been such an exceptional month, (and because I have some left-over space on this page) I should point out that Alan Ross, who compiles these newsletters, spends a lot of time hunting for these articles, and probably misses a few, too. If you find any Northumbria Blood Bike publicity, please send a link or a scanned image to him to ensure it features in the next issue. Email: alan.ross@northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk



WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO KEEP NORTHUMBRIA BLOOD BIKES OPERATIONAL?

Not many people are aware of just how much effort it takes to keep our charity from running out of money. We spend around £1000.00 every month on fuel alone, then there's tax, insurance, uniforms, advertising materials, training materials, phone calls, bike repairs, servicing, tyres, oil, livery, lights...

The list just goes on, and on, and on. Take a look at what we've done (below) in just four weeks, and ask yourself if you are able to help us, even for just a few hours, to raise funds and offset our expenses.

As you'll see in this newsletter, all this is just ONE MONTH's activities.... and we'll need to do it all again, next month, and every month. If you're able to volunteer for any events, please let us know....

This month alone, we've been to:

- **Madathlon Bike presentation**
- **Asda Living, Durham**
- **Tesco, Consett**
- **Durham Market Place**
- **Elsdon Village Fete**
- **Benfield Nissan**
- **Wansbeck Rotarians**
- **Gateshead Rotarians**
- **The Great North Run**
- **AGM (Newcastle University)**
- **Holy Cross Church**
- **Alnwick Market**

-There would've been more (Tesco, Bp.Auckland + 2 days @ Eldon Square) which we cancelled because we didn't have enough volunteers....

Can you help? Email: fundraising@northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk



This time last year:

Looking back through previous newsletters, it's hard to take in how quickly the group has expanded. This time last year, we were announcing in our newsletter that we were looking to purchase bike number #2 ("Octagon"). So, in twelve months we've added five bikes? That's just scary!!!

For those of you who are new to our group, we've only been fully operational since March this year, so twelve months ago we were busy raising funds to buy uniforms (we didn't have any!), and negotiating with hospital trusts to try and get agreements in place for our service to begin.

We'd just announced that we would start to support our neighbouring group (Bloodrun EVS) with relays between NHSBT and James Cook University Hospital in Middlesbrough. Longer serving members will recall that we sat by the phone for weeks, bike keys in hand, but no calls came through to us..... Various red-tape issues resulted in the offer being put on hold & riders were stood down.

It's only when you look back at the newsletters of a year ago that you truly appreciate the amount of progress we have made in such a short time. Perhaps now, with six bikes and a fully operational service, we can slow down and take stock of what we already have, and plan a steadier, more "controlled" expansion for the twelve months ahead....



Annual General Meeting

Our AGM took place on Tuesday 3rd September at The Wheatheaf, Woollington. The annual reports were received, Committee posts were re-elected and a really good debate filled the "any other business" session where just about every conceivable subject was discussed! It was right in the middle of the holiday season, so we appreciate the efforts of all who attended. Members were updated with the development of the group throughout the last twelve months, together with an insight as to where we're heading... upwards!

A cracking month for fundraising!

AGM attendees were advised of an offer from the Shears Foundation to fund two bikes for us, however a condition was attached that we must get the NHS to part-finance our operational costs. Sadly this contradicts our constitution; one of the primary principles of our group is to provide a free service, so unfortunately we could not accept the offer. However, extremely generous donations were received from the AG Owners club and the Catherine Cookson Trust which has put us in a position where we can now consider the purchase of a second bike. We're looking at options over the coming weeks and will keep you informed via the website, forum and social networking.



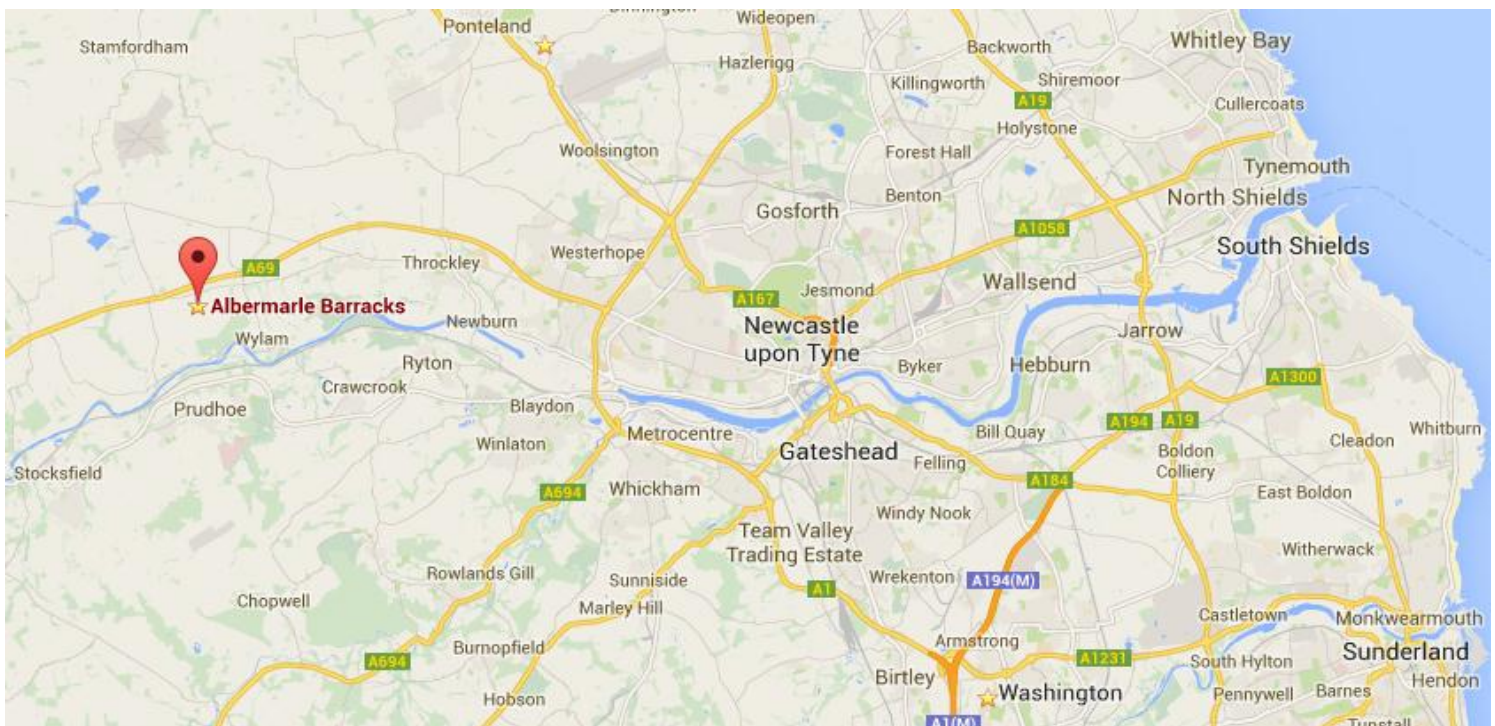
Events: past, present & future:

The replacement to the "Hoppings" fair at Newcastle Town Moor had our volunteers attending throughout the week, and was very successful: we increased public awareness, raised funds, and accrued a few potential members. Waitrose in Newcastle were kind enough to involve us in their green charity token scheme and although we didn't get the most tokens, we had a city centre location from which our group could be promoted. Coming shortly we have a couple of days in Morston, Morpeth and Sainsbury's (Armsion Centre, Durham) but our big event of the month is the Great North Run, this weekend. We have at least three people running in the event, and, thanks to Owain (our publicity guru), there might be a very recognisable motorcycle leading the runners at the start line! Make sure you tune in and see! For future events our new gazebo has arrived... No photos yet, but it's printed up with our logo etc and is ready for use. We also plan to do some additional banners & videos as the ones we have used for the past year featured photos from other groups. Now we're a little more equipped we plan to make some banners and even video with photos of our own bike in local locations.



From Barrack Road to Albermarle Barracks:

Picture: Google Maps



From September 15th, we will have one of our bikes based at Albermarle Barracks to the west of our region, providing a relay for regular runs between Newcastle and Cumbria. This is a trial in response to requests from Bloodbikes Cumbria & SW Scotland for regular runs between their region and ours. A new rota (7pm-midnight) has been set-up specifically for this trial, and all the details for access and directions etc are provided in the members section of our forum. The bike should be safe, guarded by the military! It's expected that if demand for the runs meets expectations, the trial may well become a permanent addition to our service. - Good collaboration with our neighbours!!!

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Future events to put in your diary:

For more info on any event on this page, email Graham at fundraising@northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk
Without fundraising, we simply wouldn't survive. We need to keep raising money to finance our fuel, tax and insurance charges, pay for our uniforms, tracking devices, printing materials and more. We also need to save up a cash reserve for bike maintenance, and the inevitable days in the future when we need to replace a bike. Please spare an hour or two at one of the events below if you can; showing your support helps to keep us operational and we really appreciate whatever help you can give.



Northumbria Blood Bikes Annual General Meeting:

Okay, not a fundraising event, but important opportunity for our members to see how we've performed in the last year, what's in line for the future, and to discuss / vote in important issues.
Rutherford Hall, Northumbria University Ellison Building, , 7pm - 9pm.



Sainsburys, Arnison Centre, Durham:

10am to 4pm in one of our regular venues....always a good event for fundraising. We're fully staffed for this one, but you're more than welcome to pop in & say hello if you're in the area!



Croft Hottrax motorbike race meeting:

NBB members will be in attendance on Saturday & Sunday with a bike.
West Lane, Dalton on Tees, North Yourkshire DL2 2PL



ASDA, Bishop Auckland:

Three people needed for an awareness & fundraising display inc.Bike.
At the time of writing, only one person has volunteered, can you help?



ASDA, Benton:

The start of the Christmas shopping madness, hopefully a good day for us!
10am-4pm, No bag packing, just a store-front awareness / collecting event.



ASDA, Gosforth:

All hands on deck for the busiest bag-pack to date....
Lots and lots of volunteers needed, even if you're only there for an hour while the missus does the Christmas shop.... We need you, please help us!!!



That's all for this month; thank you all for your continuing support. 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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