



Members Newsletter

April 2013

Welcome to our first monthly newsletter, introduced to help all members keep up to date with how the group is developing.

This first edition gives a brief overview of what we are trying to achieve and our progress during our first six months. Then there is more detail on developments since our last members open meeting on 14 March and the issues we are working on. Finally there is more information about how you can get involved.

What We Are Trying to Achieve:

As most of you will already know, the charity's official 'objective' is:

"To provide effective and timely transportation of essential blood and medical products between both hospital trusts, companies and/or third party representatives to enhance patient care in both emergency and non-emergency cases. To ensure that a positive image of motorcycling is maintained. This service will primarily operate in the Tyne and Wear, Northumberland and County Durham areas, however, it has the right to expand its boundaries to achieve service requirements" (from our Constitution)

Our First Six Months (in brief):

We decided to establish a group September 2012 / committee formed;

Agreed to conform to Nationwide Association of Blood Bikes guidelines

(<http://www.bloodbikes.org.uk/>)

Constitution adopted; Decision taken to use only bikes owned by the group and that all those riding for the group needed to be advanced riders;

Registered the charity with HM Revenue and Customs (number XT 37996);

Began fundraising: letters and phone calls made, collecting tins purchased and distributed; received donations from individuals and companies; collected in a supermarket; have raised £2,500 with promise of match funding of the same amount.

We began discussions with local NHS Trusts, initially giving priority to those in the Tyne and Wear area. Website with Members Forum set up; Facebook groups, LinkedIn and Twitter presences established.



Since our Last Meeting:

Providing effective and timely transportation of essential blood and medical products

To date, we have 43 members. We have agreed to produce Membership Cards; photos will be taken at the next members' open meeting.

We've had an extremely positive discussion with the Facilities Manager at the *Northumbria Trust*, particularly regarding the transfer of patient records out-of-hours from their Silverlink site. Northumbria is also interested in our service extending into the Cumbria area when they take over the Trust based in Carlisle in October 2013. We have said we could do this via a staging post service with the NWL&L Blood Bikes Group; however they have not yet extended into the Carlisle area. Discussions are continuing with the *Newcastle NHS Trust*; and a first meeting is being set up with *Gateshead / South of Tyne*.

We are now registering with BT Giving and Virgin Giving.

At the Members Open Meeting there were volunteers who agreed to contact various supermarket groups to arrange collections / bag packing etc, and also volunteers to contact employers. We still need a volunteer(s) to lead on work with schools; All collecting tins are out, 5 more are being ordered; certificates have been produced to record our thanks when tins emptied;



We will have a presence at Bikewise in Durham (28 July), so please come along and see us! We have a stand booked and it's a fantastic opportunity to raise the group's profile. We'll be showing off at least one of our liveried mini motos, (see next page).

Training: We decided to start training activities (in addition to the advanced riding requirement). Two slow riding classes have been held; there were four members at the first, but *none* at the second - we trust the poor weather (snow!) was responsible for this disappointing turn out.

One group assessed ride for an advanced rider took place; this was successful. Members are asked to contact Geoff (Training@northumbriabloodbikes.co.uk) to agree a date for their assessment. The rider will need to pay for Geoff's petrol.

Our first ride-out was successful, if a bit chilly. Geoff will be organising more, so watch this space or better still, follow the group on Facebook and sign up for the Forum.



It was agreed that further training sessions and another ride-out should be scheduled for May / June, so please watch the website & Facebook for further details!

Although we recognise the need for a branded bike at publicity / fundraising events, we decided it would be best to wait until we could afford to spend at least £5,000 - £6,000 on a second-hand bike; we have had offers of help to source good machines at trade prices.

We now have two 'Northumbria Blood Bikes' branded mini motos to use at fund-raising events. Thanks to committee members Owain and Richard for sourcing and sorting these, and particularly to Benfield Motors for the paint jobs! The "before" and "after" pictures of them are below....



A number of members are undertaking advanced riding training with IAM or RoSPA, we need as many members as possible to be qualified so if you need to, take advantage of the good weather(!) and get training!

We agreed that all riders would be expected to conform to NABB 'uniform' requirements and wear white helmets (N.B. extremely good discounts for members available from Just Helmets), and that we would not require the use of headsets.

It was also agreed that memberships would expire at the end of September each year (for anyone joining on/after 1 June each year, membership will run until the end of September the following year).

Providing effective and timely transportation of essential blood and medical products

We have decided to consult members before agreeing on Shift Patterns and Base, to build up a picture of what might maximise the number of shifts carried out – we'll email everyone with a link to the survey when it's ready to go.

Martin Price (committee member) is using time 'donated' by his employer to develop our IT functionality in order to help manage our operations. We are researching other group's solutions, so that we can build on their work.

We've agreed to apply for NABB Membership asap; we don't have everything in place yet, but we're assured that all that is required is the commitment from us. We've already benefited greatly from their support – including bringing us together in the first place!

We researched Public Liability & Trustee Indemnity Insurances and in the process of taking these out. We will also register with the Charities Commission as soon as we can demonstrate that we have annual income of £5,000

Current Priorities:

Fundraising: we still need to generate lots more funding – additional help is always needed, contact Hazel (fundraising@northumbriabloodbikes.co.uk) to offer your help;

Making 'Service Level Agreements' with the local NHS; we're slowly getting there but if you work in the NHS or know someone who does and think you can help, contact Richard (hospitalliaison@northumbriabloodbikes.co.uk);



We need lots of members to be able to operate, not just riders but people to be shift controllers and to help with fundraising. There are plenty of bike groups out there that we can work through, if you want help in approaching them send a message via the website.

There will also be loads of bike related events through the summer, e.g. BikeWise, where we can raise our profile – as many of us as possible are needed to help;

We need our riders not just to be advanced riders but also to have been assessed by the group, so help get an assessment from Geoff as soon as possible!

Completing the Members Handbook: this will contain all our operating procedures, including health and safety measures.

Getting Involved:

We've always thought that it would take about a year to become operational and that looks about right. To make it a reality we need lots of active members. Committee contact details for training, fundraising and hospital / NHS liaison have been given above but if you want to help in any other way or you're unsure what you can do to help, then contact me, Peter Robertson (chairman@northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk)

FUNDRAISING HOTLINE: 07766 479 770

- for any opportunities to increase our funding through sponsorship, locations for collecting tins, supermarket events etc...



Providing effective and timely transportation of essential blood and medical products